

While on the subject of rare visitors to the Gulf of St. Lawrence I will add that on the 13th and 14th of August, 1883, I saw a Man-of-war Bird, (*Tachypetes aquilus*) outside of the Bay here. A few days later it was again seen by Capt. Le Blanc of the 'Manicoriagan Light Ship,' thirty miles west of Godbout.—NAP. A. COMEAU, *Godbout, Quebec*.

Oidemia perspicillata in Florida.—A male of this species was taken January 23, near Punta Rassa, at the southern entrance to Charlotte Harbor.—FRANK M. CHAPMAN, *New York, N. Y.*

An Addition to the List of North American Birds.—I have in my collection two specimens, taken in Texas, of *Rallus longirostris caribæus* Ridg., heretofore only known in the West Indies. They are exactly like the type kindly sent me by Mr. Ridgway, and are undoubtedly referable to this form. A female was taken by Mr. Fred. Webster and myself at Galveston, Feb. 28, 1877, and a male was taken by my collector, Jno. M. Priour, at Corpus Christi, May 19, 1887.—GEORGE B. SENNETT, *Am. Mus. Nat. Hist., New York City*.

The Yellow Rail in Connecticut.—I am indebted to Mr. E. H. Austin of Gaylordsville, Conn., for a specimen of the Yellow Rail (*Porzana noveboracensis*) found at that place on March 24. Mr. Austin writes in reference to it: "It was picked up in the morning at the side of the road near the river by a boy who found it in an exhausted condition, and was taken into the house where it revived enough to run about the room, but finally died in the evening. The most singular point in my mind is that the Saturday it was found the thermometer stood at 10°, and the day before at 7°. It was taken into the Post Office as a rare or unknown bird."

It proved to be a male. I sent the contents of the gizzard to the Department of Agriculture, and Dr. A. K. Fisher says in a letter of the 30th inst.: "The seeds found in the gizzard of the Rail are as follows: one grape seed, one grass seed (*Paspalum*), two sedges (*Carex*). Probably the grape seed was taken in with gravel."

Mr. Austin has recorded his discovery in 'Forest and Stream.'—C. K. AVERILL, JR., *Bridgeport, Conn.*

Notes on *Melanerpes torquatus*.—During the springs of 1885, 1886, and 1887, I made constant observations upon the migration of birds at Fort Wingate, New Mexico, but during those three years never so much as observed anywhere in that region a specimen of Lewis's Woodpecker (*M. torquatus*); nor, as for that matter, at any other time during the year. This spring (1888), however, my son noted a bird of this species in a large pine tree close to the garrison buildings, and when I was out next day (May 8), four other specimens were in sight at one time, within two miles of the station. These, as usual, were extremely wary, and I only succeeded in obtaining one fine adult female.

Upon carefully plucking this bird, I found the pterylosis to be for the

most part typically Picine in character, though we are to note that the sub-median longitudinal capital apterium is but barely discernible, while I utterly failed to detect the presence of any naked temporal spaces whatever. In these particulars, *M. torquatus* nearly agrees with *Sphyrapicus*. The uropygial papilla is tufted, but the glands lying beneath the skin are small and elongated.

After having removed the integuments, it is seen that the free extremities of the limbs of the hyoid extend only as far forward as the middle of the parietal region, or the vault of the cranium; otherwise the lingual apparatus of this species seems to be as we find it in other Woodpeckers. It has a markedly small heart for the size of the bird, and the tissue of the liver is of a very friable nature. The gizzard is large and muscular, its periphery being raised into bounding muscular ridges, and the *musculi intermedii* very prominent. Making a section through it, I find a firm, rugose, horny lining, and its contents consisting of a quantity of small-sized hard-winged beetles, of a species unknown to me. Intestinal cæca are absent, and the intestinal tract, for its lower part, is of a very large calibre. Even at this time of the year, the ovaries in this specimen are small, the largest ova being no bigger than No. 4 shot. An account of the skeleton of this species will be given by the writer in another connection, when it will be fully compared with the skeletons of other North American species of the same group. — R. W. SHUFELDT, *Fort Wingate, New Mexico*.

Early nesting of *Octocoris alpestris praticola*.—March 26, 1888, while returning from a trip after Crossbills, I flushed a female Horned Lark within one hundred feet of where I found my first nest last season (April 11, 1887), and as she acted as they usually do when nesting, out of curiosity I began to search, and was rewarded by finding the nest, a mere cavity in the side of a sandy knoll, lined with dead grasses, a little thistle down, and a few mayweed blossoms. The eggs had been incubated a few days. On the 21st, 22d, and 23d the thermometer ranged in the vicinity of zero, and in fact the spring has been very backward. When you approach the nest, *usually* the female sneaks from two to three rods before flying, then flies to a short distance, observes you closely, begins to pick on the ground, and then flies to a distant part of the field to be joined by her mate. Occasionally a female will hover for a moment over you, if you are close to the nest, but they vary so in actions that it is hard to describe the different peculiarities.

Since the above I have taken other sets. April 3, three nests of three eggs each in stubble fields on knolls. April 4, one set of four eggs, much incubated, in oat stubble. April 6, set of four fresh eggs in stubble, and the same day a nest with one young fledgling, which I should judge to have been two or three days old, on the side of a knoll in a newly seeded meadow. The young bird was about a foot outside of the nest, and very cold, but alive, for which I cannot account as the old birds were flushed about a rod from the nest. April 7, nest of four nearly fresh eggs, in oat



Shufeldt, Robert Wilson. 1888. "Notes on *Melanerpes torquatus*." *The Auk* 5, 319–320. <https://doi.org/10.2307/4067329>.

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