

No. 1451 (52), taken at Hopedale by W. W. Perrett in 1898, in slightly worn plumages, measures, wing, 2.75; tail, 1.86; tarsus, .80; bill, .41 × .42.

No. 1452 (55), taken at Okak by C. Schmitt on July 6, 1896, in unworn plumage, measures, wing, 2.90; tail, 1.95; tarsus, .84; bill, .40 × .26.

No. 1453, taken at Okak by C. Schmitt on June 29, 1897, in worn plumage, measures, wing, 2.56; tail, 1.87; tarsus, .80; bill, .39 × .24.

It was pointed out by Dr. Allen in 1871 (*Winter Birds of Florida*) that Savanna Sparrows show tremendous individual variation, which is by the way true to a great degree in all *Fringillidæ*, and he tabulated the measurements of twenty-six breeding specimens from Massachusetts which showed a range of wing measurement from 2.44 to 2.95, only two of which, both males, however, measured over 2.80, and these two, Nos. 5092 and 5096 in the collection of the Museum of Comp. Zoölogy, I have remeasured, and had my measurements checked, and find they now measure 2.90 and 2.62 respectively. Of some hundreds of measurements published by others, and taken from fresh and dried skins, I have yet to find but this one bird from south of Labrador whose wing measurement overlaps sexed Labrador specimens.

The range of wing measurements shown by Labrador specimens which I have examined is as follows:—males, 2.86–2.93; female, 2.65¹. Unsexed, including immature, 2.56 (worn), 2.75–2.90.

I present these facts not to help prove the validness of the race in the face of the A. O. U. Committee's ruling, for recognition of subspecies unfortunately is often, if not generally a matter of personal opinion and judgment, but I present them simply as facts.—REGINALD HEBER HOWE, JR., *Concord, Mass.*

A Winter Record for the Chewink on Long Island, N. Y.—On January 12, 1903, I saw in a small piece of woodland near Long Island City, N. Y., a male Chewink (*Pipilo erythrophthalmus*). It was in full plumage and very active, but permitted me to approach within twenty-five feet of it. I have looked for it since, but have not seen it again. This is the only instance known to me of this species wintering here.—W. F. HENDRICKSON, *Long Island City, N. Y.*

Note on *Sylvia cærulea* Wilson.—In 'The Auk' for January, 1897 (XIV, p. 97), Mr. Ridgway published a short note entitled '*Dendroica cærulea* vs. *Dendroica rara*,' stating that *Sylvia cærulea* Wilson (1810) was unfortunately preoccupied by *Sylvia cærulea* Latham (1790), and that the earliest tenable specific name for the Cerulean Warbler is *rara* (*Sylvia rara*) Wilson, 1811. Of course, here was a clear case, provided the

¹ Specimen kindly loaned by Mr. W. E. Clyde Todd, No. 393, Carnegie Museum, taken at Nain, Aug. 26, 1901, by D. A. Atkinson. Appreciably larger than the average of southern females.

facts were as alleged. In the same number of 'The Auk' (p. 131) the proposed change was endorsed by the A. O. U. Committee on Nomenclature (Eighth Supplement), and is of course adopted in Mr. Ridgway's 'Birds of North and Middle America' (Part II, p. 570).

In 'The Auk' for April, 1899 (XVI, p. 185), Mr. Oberholser called attention to the ruling of the A. O. U. Committee on this case, and showed that in accordance with this ruling the name of the House Finch would be *Carpodacus mexicanus obscurus* (McCall) instead of *C. m. frontalis* (Say), on the ground that Say's name *Fringilla frontalis* (1823) was preoccupied by a *Fringilla frontalis* Vieillot (1817). Mr. Oberholser evidently accepted the Committee's ruling on the *Dendroica cærulea* case with reservation, which he says "involves an interpretation of Canon XXXIII of the A. O. U. Code of Nomenclature to which little if any attention seems to have been called." He continues: "It appears advisable to raise this question, inasmuch as it affects the validity of some other current names; and this the more as in regard to it there seems to be neither unanimity of opinion nor uniformity of practice. Briefly stated, it is this: in considering the tenability of specific names, so far as preoccupation is concerned, shall any account be taken of homonyms which are mere combinations, *i. e.*, not original descriptions? To illustrate: *Motacilla cærulea* of Linnæus, 1766, was called *Sylvia cærulea* by Latham in 1790,—evidently a simple transfer of Linnæus's species to another genus. Now, does this *Sylvia cærulea* of Latham, 1790, preclude the use of *Sylvia cærulea* Wilson, 1810, for another and widely different species, the former being now a *Polioptila*, and the latter a *Dendroica*? Canon XXXIII is apparently quite explicit upon this point, its text being as follows: '... a specific or subspecific name is to be changed when it has been applied to some other species of the same genus, or used previously in combination with the same generic name.' The phrase, 'or used previously in combination with the same generic name,' seems to leave no doubt of its meaning; and a strictly literal interpretation of this clause will treat alike all combinations, whether or not they happen to be those of original descriptions."

I have quoted Mr. Oberholser at length, for the reason that he has stated the case so fully and concisely. The phraseology of that portion of Canon XXXIII quoted by Mr. Oberholser is open to his construction of it, and apparently to no other. Yet that no such ruling was intended by the Committee I am sure; for (if I may be pardoned a seemingly egotistical reminiscence) I may say that I formulated Canon XXXIII, and the explanatory remarks under it, and I am sure that nothing was further from my intention, or that of the Committee, than to enact a provision open to a construction so at variance with general usage in such matters, and with the practices of the Committee, previously (as individuals) and since. The two pages of 'remarks' under Canon XXXIII discuss all phases of the subject except this, and clearly show that the Committee had in mind only homonyms given as names to species described as new,

and not homonyms due to the shuffling of names, or to the reclassification of species under other genera than those under which they were originally described. In fact, any other construction never occurred to me prior to Mr. Oberholser's discussion of the case of *Sylvia cærulea* Wilson.

In regard to the action of the Committee on this case, I must confess, with shame, that I did not look up the matter, and did not know that Latham's *Sylvia cærulea* was simply Linnæus's *Motacilla cærulea*, but supposed Latham's *Sylvia cærulea* was bestowed upon a species considered by him as not previously described.

As I had never before known of any attempt to change a name in ornithology on such grounds I was taken quite unawares, and voted for the change without knowing the real facts in the case. Whether or not the original change was an inadvertence on the part of Mr. Ridgway, he has in other cases followed a directly opposite course. In the case of the House Finch the Committee ruled (Tenth Suppl., Auk, July, 1901, 311) that *Fringilla frontalis* Vieillot, 1817, did not render invalid *Fringilla frontalis* Say, 1824, for the reason that Vieillot's *Fringilla frontalis* was simply the reference of a previous *Loxia frontalis* to the genus *Fringilla*. This case is perfectly parallel to that of *Dendroica cærulea* vs. *D. rara*, which has not heretofore been formally challenged, and thus has not come before the Committee for reconsideration.—J. A. ALLEN, *Am. Mus. Nat. Hist., New York City*.

A Late Fall Record for the Cape May Warbler (*Dendroica tigrina*) in Eastern Massachusetts.—Toward dusk of Oct. 9, 1902, at the time when smaller birds are actively moving about, I noticed a few restless warblers in a Norway maple near my home in Ponkapog, Mass. It was impossible for me to determine the species, as they remained near the top of the tree, but one bird was shot, and proved an immature female Cape May Warbler. I am not positive as to the identity of the other birds in this group, but one other bird which I saw was not *Dendroica tigrina*.—FRED. B. McKECHNIE, *Boston, Mass.*

Late Records for Eastern Massachusetts.—Mr. Louis A. Shaw of Chestnut Hill, Mass., informs me that he shot on the 20th of November, 1902, an adult male Wilson's Warbler (*Wilsonia pusilla*), which he had first noted on the previous day. This is the second record of the capture of this warbler in late autumn in Massachusetts (Hoffmann, Auk, 1900, p. 196). Mr. Shaw also reports seeing Fox Sparrows (*Passerella iliaca*) on December 4, 1902, and a Ruby-crowned Kinglet (*Regulus calendula*) on November 16, 1902.—REGINALD HEBER HOWE, JR., *Concord, Mass.*

A Case of Mistaken Diagnosis.—In August, 1882, while searching in an ancient shell-heap near Northeast Harbor, Mt. Desert Island, Maine, I found what appeared to be the upper mandible of a bird's bill. In the same shell-heap, two years before, I had found part of the tarsus of a



Allen, J. A. 1903. "Note on *Sylvia caerulea* Wilson." *The Auk* 20, 216–218.
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