

holder (*Juniperus virginianus*), Spargel (*Asparagus officinalis*), wilde Rose (*Rosa canina*).

- b. Kern- und Knospennahrung : Esche (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Espe (*Populus tremula*), Winterlinde (*Tilia parvifolia*) und Samen von Ziersträuchern.

Beim Forsthaus **Spitzberg** (740 m) in den Nord-Vogesen (Els.-Lothr.), wo sich Flüge bis zu 15 Stück von Anfang Februar bis 12. April aufhielten, sah man sie auch auf den Dienstwiesen nach Insekten (Gewürm?) suchen.

II.—NOTE ON A RARE BITTERN

(*ZEBRILUS PUMILUS*).

By C. E. HELLMAYR.

IN the 'Bulletin of the Liverpool Museums,' vol. iii. pp. 61-62, Dr. H. O. Forbes published an interesting paper on this little-known species. After discussing the two phases of its plumage—a rufous and a blackish one—the author says:—"It must still remain, therefore, an undecided question whether these two forms belong (a) to the same or different species, (b) to the young and the adult, or (c) to the two sexes of the same species." Neither Dr. R. B. Sharpe nor Dr. H. Forbes had any sexed specimen when writing upon this bird. The specimen collected by Mr. G. Garlepp, which passed into the collection of Count Berlepsch, unfortunately was also not sexed.

The Vienna Museum, however, possesses two examples in very fine condition, collected by that illustrious explorer of Brazil, J. v. Natterer, in Matto Grosso. As is well known, Natterer was a very careful observer and he sexed all the specimens which were collected during his long travels. The birds have still Natterer's original labels attached, which read as follows:—

a. "♂" ad. "Caiçara, Matto Grosso, 16th Feb., 1826."

b. "♀" "Engenho do Gama, Matto Grosso, 9th July, 1826."

The first specimen (*a*) wears the rufous plumage, so well described by Sharpe, and agrees exactly with plate ii. of Dr. Forbes's article. The second (*b*) is in the blackish plumage as represented on plate i., *l. c.*

Quite recently the Tring Museum has received another specimen of the blackish phase from Surinam, which is again marked "♀" by the collector. I think there can remain little doubt *that the dark-coloured birds are the females and the rufous ones the males*. I may add that Natterer's specimens are both fully adult. As the localities at which they were captured belong to the same geographical region, their specific identity is established beyond doubt.

In Mr. Rothschild's collection at Tring there are three more specimens—two of the rufous and one of the blackish phase. None of them has any locality. In structure and form the sexes are quite alike, and the only difference between them consists of the coloration. Perhaps the females average somewhat smaller.

The specimens examined have the following measurements:—

A. *Rufous phase* (= *males*).

	Wing. mm.	Tail. mm.	Tarsus. mm.	Bill. mm.
1. Mus. Vindob. "♂" ad., "Caiçara, 16th Feb. 1826" (<i>Natterer</i>)	140	58	39	42
2. Mus. Tring. (♂) ad., South America	145	57½	39	—
3. " " (♂) jr., " "	139	—	39	37

B. *Blackish phase* (= *females*).

4. Mus. Vindob. "♀" ad., "Engenho do Gama, 9th July, 1826" (<i>Natterer</i>)	142	56	38	42
5. Mus. Tring. "♀" ad., "Rijweg, near Paramaribo, Surinam, 10th Nov. 1904." [<i>Chunkoo coll.</i>]	143	53	39	43
6. Mus. Tring. (♀), South America	137	57	37½	43

While the three males are very uniform among themselves, the series of the females presents rather marked differences. Natterer's bird and the one from Surinam have the buff lower parts only sparingly freckled and striped with blackish, whereas in No. 3 the whole fore-neck and breast are covered with broad,

large bars and stripes, so that the blackish markings decidedly predominate over the buff ground-colour. The black bars on the belly are also considerably broader than in the other two specimens. The upper surface is much alike in the three females before me, being black and crossed all over by fine buff vermiculations except the elongated crest-feathers, which are uniform black. In the males the rufous cross-bars on the upper surface are much broader and more distinct.

The following are the only known localities from which *Zebrilus pumilus* has been recorded :—

CAYENNE (*Buffon*). SURINAM: Rijweg, near Paramaribo (*Chunkoo coll.*). BRITISH GUIANA (*E. Im-Thurn*). N.E. PERU: Shanusi, near Yurimaguas* (*G. Garlepp coll.*). W. BRAZIL: Matto Grosso; Caiçara, on the Upper Paraguay; Engenho do Gama, on the Rio Guaporé (*Natterer coll.*).

Typical locality: CAYENNE (*ex Buffon*).

III.—SOME COMMON-SENSE NOTES ON CREEPERS, TITMICE, AND REED-WARBLERS.

By ERNST HARTERT.

HAVING just finished the review of the *Certhiidae* and *Paridae* for my book 'Die Vögel der paläarktischen Fauna,' I believe that a few short remarks may interest the readers of the 'Ornis.'

Among the *Certhiidae* it did not surprise me to find how comparatively easy it became—after a little study and time spent with the Creepers—to distinguish the two European species, *Certhia familiaris* and *Certhia brachydactyla*, as I knew the differences already from former acquaintance with this group; but I came to the conclusion that not only the Creepers from N.W. Africa, Spain, Southern Italy, and Asia Minor, but also the North-American forms belong to the *brachydactyla*-group, and not to *familiaris*. It is amusing to find notes by observant British travellers to the effect, that the call-notes and song of

* Berlepsch, Journ. f. Ornith. 1889, p. 318.



Hellmayr, Carl Eduard. 1905. "Note on a rare Bittern (*Zebrilus pumilus*).*" Ornithologia* 13, 56–58.

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