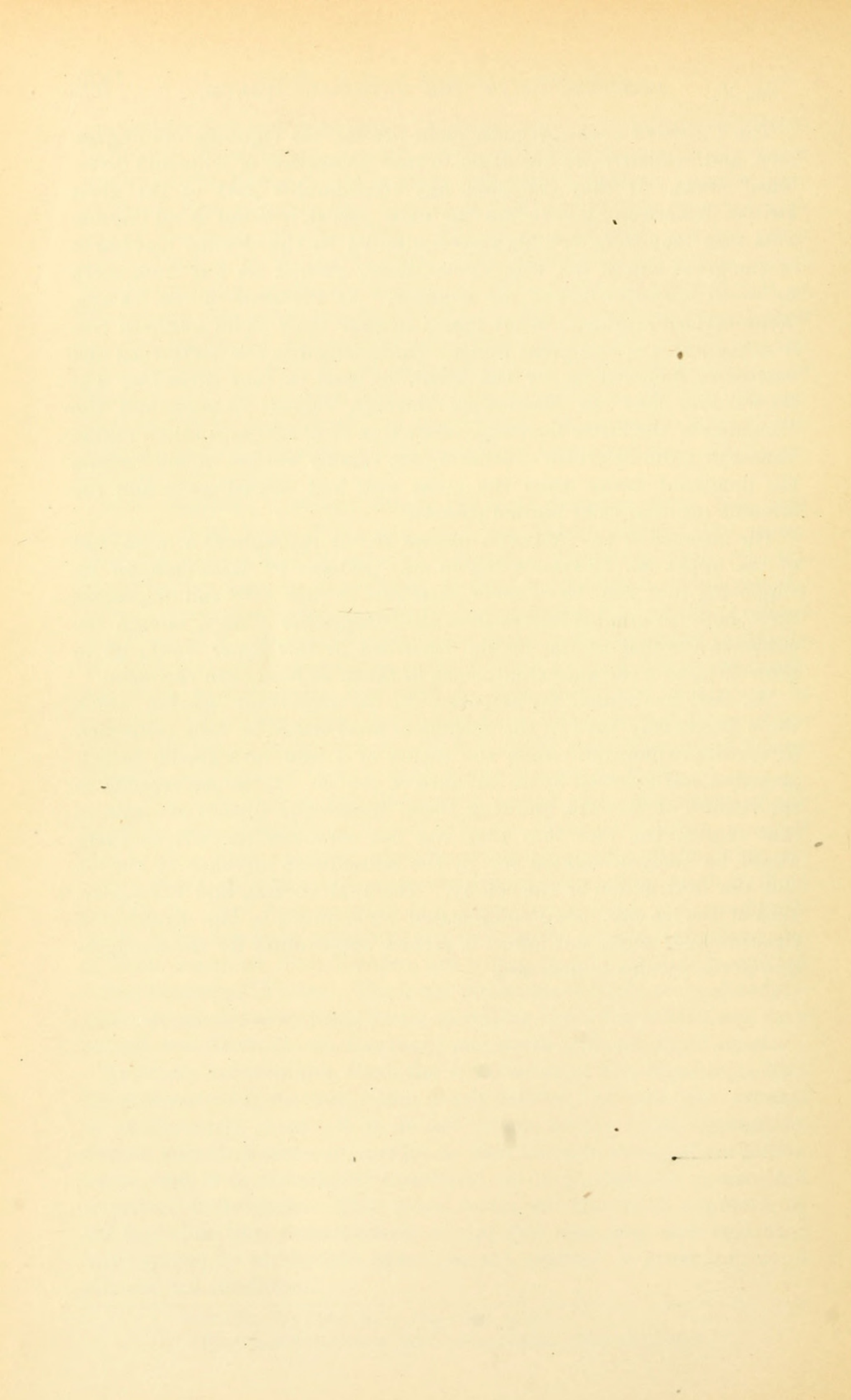


The *Unionidae* of the Atlantic slope are far less vigorous and aggressive, and evidently are not fitted to take possession of wide and diversified areas. If they occupied any considerable part of the great British American plain before the drift period, it is not at all improbable that they were well-nigh exterminated by the onward movement of the great cap of ice, which relentlessly ground its way from north to south over the face of the country. At the close of the ice age, when this great glacial sheet began to melt away at its southern border, the water of this great region, which sloped to the northward and eastward, dammed up by the great ice wall in that direction, was forced over into the Mississippi through various outlets, and the Unionids of the latter territory, finding an easy entrance into a region almost or quite destitute of other forms, rapidly worked in and became the dominant fauna when the great wall had melted away and the streams resumed their normal courses.

The absence of the Atlantic species to-day throughout a large part of the upper St. Lawrence region may perhaps be accounted for by supposing that they have never been able to cope with and dispossess their more persistent relatives from the Mississippi Valley, though the evidence afforded by the fossils described in this paper would go to show that, to a certain extent, some of them, at least, had retreated.

Mr. Dall has called my attention to the important bearing which these fossils may have (if the geological facts stated be fully confirmed by further exploration) upon the theory of a mild interglacial period, preceded and followed by an advance of the ice. If the ice receded to the vicinity of Toronto, allowing these Mississippi species to attain to that region, the fact that they did not establish themselves there would be easily accounted for by the subsequent advance of the ice and the destruction of the colony. The final melting and disappearance of the ice cap, being complicated by changes in the direction of the drainage, might not afford a second opportunity for the immigration of the species in question.



DESCRIPTIONS OF SOME NEW BIRDS COLLECTED ON THE
ISLANDS OF ALDABRA AND ASSUMPTION, NORTHWEST OF
MADAGASCAR, BY Dr. W. L. ABBOTT.

BY

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Curator of the Department of Birds.

1. *Ixocincla madagascariensis rostrata* subsp. nov.

SUBSP. CHAR.—Similar to true *I. madagascariensis*, but larger, the bill especially, and coloration paler.

HAB.—Aldabra and Gloriosa islands.

Type, No. 128,658, male ad., Aldabra Island, October 2, 1892; Dr. W. L. Abbott. Length (before skinning), 9½ inches; wing, 4.50; tail, 4.00; exposed culmen, 0.82; depth of bill through nostril, 0.28; tarsus, 0.86; middle toe, 0.65. "Bill orange-red, tip black; feet fleshy brown." (ABBOTT, MS.)

2. *Buchanga aldabrana* sp. nov.

SP. CHAR.—Differing from *B. atra* in larger and more strongly hooked bill, much longer nasal plumes (reaching halfway from nostrils to tip of bill), much narrower rectrices, and in the very pale coloration of the female.

Adult male (type, No. 128,719, U. S. Nat. Mus., Aldabra Island, October 8, 1892; Dr. W. L. Abbott): Entirely black, glossed with greenish blue, the remiges and rectrices much duller, more brownish, and very faintly glossed. "Irides red, bill and feet black." Length (before skinning), 11.25; wing, 5.30; tail, 5.55; middle feathers, 4.20; culmen (from extreme base), 1.15; depth of bill through nostril, 0.38; tarsus, 0.92; middle toe, 0.60.

Adult female (No. 128,722, same locality and collector, October 2, 1892): Above dull slate-gray, the margins of the feathers on forehead and hind neck and lower part of rump approaching grayish white; wing-coverts dull greenish slate indistinctly edged with dull brownish white; remiges and rectrices dull grayish brown, edged with paler. Under parts grayish white, the feathers of the breast, belly, etc., dusky grayish be-

neath the surface; under wing-coverts almost wholly pure white. Bill, legs, and feet black; "irides reddish brown." Length (before skinning), 9.75; wing, 4.80; tail, 4.80; middle feathers, 4.08; culmen (to concealed base), 1.12; depth of bill through nostril, 0.38; tarsus, 0.90; middle toe, 0.60.

Immature males are variously intermediate in color between the adult male and adult female.

The collection contains three adult males, two immature males, and one adult female, representing dates from October 2-19, inclusive.

3. *Foudia aldabrana* sp. nov.

SP. CHAR.—Similar to *F. madagascariensis* (LINN.), but very much larger.

Adult male (type, No. 128,692, U. S. Nat. Mus., Aldabra Island, October 5, 1892; Dr. W. L. Abbott): Head, neck, chest, and upper breast bright scarlet (flame scarlet on under parts); rest of under parts rather light chrome-yellow, tinged with orange on abdomen and with scarlet on the crissum. Lores and orbits black. Back and scapulars light yellowish olive broadly streaked with black; rump plain light tawny olive-brown; upper tail-coverts flame-scarlet. Wings dull blackish, all the feathers margined with light olive or olive-yellowish; tail olive-grayish, the feathers edged with yellowish olive. "Bill black; irides dark brown; feet brownish flesh." Length (before skinning), 6.50 inches; wing, 3.30; tail, 2.10; culmen, 0.75; depth of bill at base, 0.50; tarsus, 0.92; middle toe, 0.65.

Adult female (No. 128,690, same locality and collector, October 3): Pileum and hind neck deep olive-buff, narrowly and rather indistinctly streaked with dusky; superciliary stripe, cheeks, and sides of neck, light brownish yellow; a post-ocular streak of dusky; anterior under parts pale Naples-yellow (palest on throat), the posterior lower parts deeper yellow. Otherwise like the adult male, but without trace of red anywhere. "Upper mandible horny brown, lower mandible pale horny; feet flesh-color." Length (before skinning), 5.50; wing, 3.05; tail, 2.10; culmen, 0.70; depth of bill at base, 0.50; tarsus, 0.85; middle toe, 0.60.

Two other adult males show a mixture of red on the back, and one of them has the lower rump, as well as the upper tail-coverts, red. It is therefore probable that in full plumage this species has the red as extensive as in *F. madagascariensis*.

A young male is like the female described above, but is somewhat brighter yellow beneath.

4. *Rougetius aldabranus* sp. nov.

SP. CHAR.—Similar to *R. gularis*, of Assumption, but without trace of dusky streaks on dorsal region, and with white bars on belly and flanks much less distinct (sometimes almost wanting).



Ridgway, Robert. 1893. "Descriptions of some new birds collected on the islands of Aldabra and Assumption, northwest of Madagascar, by Dr. W. L. Abbott." *Proceedings of the United States National Museum* 16(953), 597–600.
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