

sion of a similar—if not the same—bird taken at the Charleston market in August, 1886. Mr. Wayne bought this specimen for me from the taxidermist who mounted it and who, unfortunately, is able to furnish no precise information respecting the color of the soft parts in life, save that “the head was red like a Turkey Buzzard’s.” In the dried specimen the bill is dull straw-color, the bare skin of the head and neck yellowish-brown, the legs, feet and claws pale brownish-orange. The head and neck are also tinged with purple, but this is evidently the result of a clumsy attempt to reproduce the original color, for the dye has stained some of the feathers as well as a portion of the tow protruding from the eye socket. In all other respects—excepting that the bill is unusually depressed and the fifth primary on each wing white to its base—the bird agrees perfectly with average specimens of the Black Vulture. That it is merely an abnormally colored example of that species is sufficiently obvious, but its peculiarities are certainly at once interesting and curious.—WILLIAM BREWSTER, *Cambridge, Mass.*

The Swallow-tailed Kite in Rensselaer County, New York.—In my collection is a specimen of an *Elanoides forficatus*, mounted by Mr. William Gibson, of Lansingburg, N. Y., who told me that he received the dead bird July 17, 1886, from Mr. Griffin Haight, and that by dissecting the bird he found it was a male. Its plumage is that of an adult, and is in partly worn and moulting condition. Wing, 15.6 inches; tail, 11.6, with fork, 5.6.

Mr. Haight has a little house on a newly cleared acre, in the border of a large wood-lot in the eastern part of the town of Pittstown, about sixteen miles northeasterly from the city of Troy, and there breeds fancy fowls which run about freely in the clearing and adjacent woods. He informs me that Hawks trouble his fowls and carry off some chickens, and on the morning of July 16 he staid at home to clean out a few of the Hawks, and had shot three, and just fired at another, when he was surprised to see, flying up from the woods by the clearing, a Swallow-tailed Kite, such as he had formerly seen in South Carolina. The Kite flew away and was gone about twenty minutes when it came down and lit on the dead stubby top of a tree by the clearing. After a few minutes, it flew up out of sight, but in about thirty minutes came down again and sat on the same dead tree-top for about seven minutes; it then flew up again out of sight. About fifty minutes later, *two* Kites came down together and lit on the same dead tree stub. As he started toward them the largest Kite flew away in a flash, and as he went nearer the other Kite darted up overhead; he fired and killed it, and sent the dead bird to Mr. Gibson to be mounted.

Mr. Haight informs me that he has since seen one or more of the Kites around a pond in a swamp of about four hundred acres, within two miles of his house; once on July 29, and several times on August 9. He also saw at a distance, on dead ash trees standing in the swamp, three or four birds having the appearance and flight of Kites, and they alighted like

young birds. He also observed one of the Kites about twenty rods off, sitting on a stub in the pond, in the latter part of August. He also tells me that on August 30, on higher ground, within a mile of his house, two of the Kites flew past him within fifty yards, and afterward coursed about together low over a field of buckwheat, as if catching insects. One of these Kites had a very long and deeply forked tail, and was larger than the other, which had its tail but little forked or nearly even at the end. Two other persons told me about seeing one or two of the birds at or near the same place.

From seeing the locality, and from the information received, it seems probable that a pair of Swallow-tailed Kites bred, in 1886, in Rensselaer County, N. Y., at about latitude $42^{\circ} 53'$, longitude $73^{\circ} 33'$, and near 600 feet above tide water level.—AUSTIN F. PARK, *Troy, N. Y.*

The Barn Owl at Englewood, N. J.—At about six o'clock on the morning of August 26, near the centre of a tolerably dense wood, I started from its roost of the previous night, a bird I was unable to identify, and which eventually escaped me. The ground and bushes beneath the tree from which it had flown were spattered with its droppings, some of them not yet dry, and here a number of feathers were found, undoubtedly shed by the bird which had passed the night above. These feathers, the basal half of a primary, a covert from either wing, and a number of smaller ones, were forwarded to Dr. A. K. Fisher at Washington, who has kindly identified them as the feathers of a Barn Owl (*Strix pratincola*).—FRANK M. CHAPMAN, *Englewood, N. J.*

Carnivorous Propensities of the Crow (*Corvus americanus*).—My neighbor, Mr. E. M. Davis, indulges in the luxury of live pets, and amongst them is a Crow, reared by hand from the nest and now perhaps three or four months old. He manifests the usual inquisitive and mischievous habits of the species in confinement, secreting various objects for which he can have no possible use, and worrying on all occasions both the cat and the dog of the premises, by picking at their toes, pulling their tails, etc. He seems to fear nothing but a small rubber hose used for sprinkling purposes, upon the first appearance of which, even before any water was thrown, he manifested the utmost fright, and fled to the house and his master for protection; this he has repeated whenever the hose appears. Query: Is it a case of hereditary fear of *snakes*? Quite recently a young House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), not fully fledged, was captured and taken into the happy family, pains being taken to keep it away from the *cat*, but not from the *Crow*, which, at its first introduction, pounced upon it savagely, seized it by the neck, shook it as a terrier does a rat, and before it could be released the Sparrow had gone the way of all birds; portions of it being eaten by its destroyer. As the Crow had been well fed, on a diet embracing meat, grain, and vegetables, the killing of the Sparrow would seem to have been the outcome of natural propensities rather than the result of the pangs of hunger.—F. W. LANGDON, *Cincinnati, Ohio*.



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