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Long-eared Owl.

adhering, and lined with fresh grass and sheep wool, but without feathers. The eggs are usually four, nearly equally rounded at both ends, thin-shelled, smooth, when newly deposited pure white, with a slight blush, which is no longer observable when they have been for some time sitten upon; their average length an inch and a half, their greatest breadth an inch and three-sixteenths. I found eggs of this bird on the 15th of April, and again on the 25th of June, which induces me to believe that it rears two broods in the season in the State of Pennsylvania, as it probably does also to the westward. WILSON relates the following instance of its indifference as to the place selected for its eggs. "About six or seven miles below Philadelphia, and not far from the Delaware, is a low swamp, thickly covered with trees, and inundated during great part of the year. This place is the resort of great numbers of the Qua-bird or Night Raven (*Ardea Nycticorax*), where they build in large companies. On the 25th of April, while wading among the dark recesses of this place, observing the habits of these birds, I discovered a Long-eared Owl, which had taken possession of one of their nests, and was sitting: on mounting to the nest, I found it contained four eggs, and breaking one of these, the young appeared almost ready to leave the shell. There were numbers of the Qua-birds' nests on the adjoining trees all around, and one of them actually on the same tree."

When encamped in the woods, I have frequently heard the notes of this bird at night. Its cry is prolonged and plaintive, though consisting of not more than two or three notes repeated at intervals.

Dr. RICHARDSON states that it has been found "as far north as lat. 60°, and probably exists as high as the forests extend. It is plentiful in the woods skirting the plains of the Saskatchewan, frequents the coast of Hudson's Bay only in the summer, and retires into the interior in the winter. It resides all the year in the United States, and perhaps is not a rare bird in any part of North America; but as it comes seldom abroad in the day, fewer specimens are obtained of it than of the other Owls. It preys chiefly on quadrupeds of the genus *Arvicola*, and in summer destroys many beetles. It lays three or four roundish white eggs, sometimes on the ground, at other times in the deserted nests of other birds in low bushes. Mr. HUTCHINS says it lays in April, and that the young fly in May; and Mr. DRUMMOND found a nest on the ground, containing three eggs, on the 5th of July, and killed both the birds. On comparing the above mentioned eggs with those of the English Long-eared Owl, the American ones proved to be smaller, measuring only an inch and a half in length, and 1.27 inches in breadth; while the English ones measured 1.8 inch in length, and 1¼ in breadth. The form and colour were the same in both."

The food of this Owl consists of rats, mice, and other small quadrupeds,

as well as birds of various species; its stomach having been found by me crammed with feathers and other remains of the latter.

There is a marked difference between the sexes. The males are not only smaller than the females, but darker; and this has tempted me to consider the *Strix Mexicanus* of Mr. SWAINSON and the Prince of MUSIGNANO as merely a large female of our Long-eared Owl.

LONG-EARED OWL, *Strix otus*, Wils. Amer. Orn., vol. vi. p. 52.

STRIX OTUS, Bonap. Syn., p. 37.

LONG-EARED OWL, *Strix otus*, Nutt. Man., vol. i. p. 130.

LONG-EARED OWL, *Strix otus*, Aud. Orn. Biog., vol. iv. p. 573.

Tufts elongated; general colour of plumage buff, mottled and spotted with brown and greyish-white; dirty whitish anteriorly, with the tips black; posteriorly reddish-white; ruff mottled with red and black; upper part of head minutely mottled with whitish, brownish-black, and light red; the tufts light reddish toward the base, brownish-black in the centre toward the end, the inner edge white, dotted with dark brown; upper parts buff, variegated with brown and whitish-grey, minutely mottled or undulatingly barred; first row of coverts tipped with white; quills and scapulars pale grey, barred with dark brown; the primaries buff toward the base externally. Tail with ten bars on the middle and eight on the outer feathers; lower parts with more buff and fewer spots than the upper; each feather with a long dark brown streak, and several irregular transverse bars; legs and toes pure buff.

Male, $14\frac{1}{2}$, 38. Female, 16, 40.

A male sent in spirits from Boston by Dr. BREWER:—The roof of the mouth is flat, with two longitudinal ridges, the sides ascending; the posterior aperture of the nares oblong, 4 twelfths long, with an anterior fissure. The tongue is $7\frac{1}{2}$ twelfths long, deeply emarginate and papillate at the base, flattish above, with a faint median groove, the sides parallel, the tip narrowed and emarginate. The mouth is very wide, measuring 1 inch and $1\frac{1}{2}$ twelfths. The œsophagus is $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, of nearly uniform diameter throughout, as in all other Owls, its breadth being 1 inch. The proventricular glandules form a belt 9 twelfths in diameter. The stomach is large, round, 1 inch 9 twelfths long, 1 inch 7 twelfths broad, its walls thin, its muscular coat composed of rather coarse fasciculi, but without distinction into lateral muscles; the tendinous spaces circular, and about 8 twelfths in diameter; its epithelium soft and rugous. The duodenum is 3 twelfths in diameter, and curves at the distance of 3 inches from the pylorus. The intestine is 23 inches long, its smallest diameter only 1 twelfth. The cœca, Fig. 2, are in this individual unequal, as they very frequently are in Owls; the largest being 2 inches 10

twelfths in length, their greatest diameter $5\frac{1}{2}$ twelfths, their distance from the anus 3 inches and a quarter. The cloaca is of an enormous size, ovate, 2 inches long, 1 inch 2 twelfths broad. It contains a calculous concretion 9 twelfths long, 7 twelfths broad, and 3 twelfths thick.

The trachea, which is 3 inches long, is $3\frac{1}{2}$ twelfths in breadth at the upper part, $2\frac{1}{2}$ twelfths in the middle, and 3 twelfths at its lower extremity; its rings about 75 in number, cartilaginous, and considerably flattened. The lateral muscles are strong, the sterno-tracheal moderate, and there is a single pair of very slender inferior laryngeal muscles. Five of the lower rings are elongated, arched, and slit. The bronchi are rather long, of 12 half rings.

The conch of the ear, Fig. 1, is of enormous size, extending from the level of the forehead over the eye to the chin, in a semilunar form, of which the posterior curve is 3 inches, and the distance between the two extremities in a direct line 1 inch and a half. There is an anterior semicircular flap in its whole length, 5 twelfths in breadth at the middle. The aperture or meatus externus is of a rhomboidal form, $4\frac{1}{2}$ twelfths in length, $3\frac{1}{2}$ twelfths broad, bounded anteriorly by the eye, posteriorly by a ligament extended along the edge of the occipital bone, above by a ligament stretching to the operculum, below the articulation of the lower jaw. Above the meatus is a deep depression covered with skin, above which another ligament stretches across to the operculum.

In another specimen, a female, the œsophagus is $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, its average diameter 11 twelfths. The intestine is 21 inches long, from $2\frac{1}{2}$ twelfths to 1 twelfth in diameter; the cœca are $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches in length; their greatest diameter 4 twelfths; the cloaca still larger than that of the other individuals, being 2 inches long.

Fig. 1.

SHORT-EARED OWL.

†OTUS BRACHYOTUS, Linn.

PLATE XXXVIII.—MALE.

Although this species is by no means scarce in almost any part of the United States, in the latter half of autumn and during winter, very few individuals spend the summer south of the Great Pine Swamp of Pennsylvania, where, however, some occasionally breed. In Nova Scotia, its nest has frequently been met with, and in Newfoundland it is as common as the Barred Owl is in Louisiana. In winter I have found it so plentiful in the Floridas, that I have shot seven in the course of a morning, while I was at General HERNANDEZ'. Indeed I was surprised to see the great number of

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Long-eared Owl.

Audubon, John James. 1840. "Long-Eared Owl, *Otus vulgaris*, Fleming. [Pl. 37]." *The birds of America : from drawings made in the United States and their territories* 1, 136–140. <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.319150>.

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