

size and noticeably different bill. In these respects it exactly matched adult specimens of Franklin's Gull in the collection of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia. Subsequently I compared it with young Franklin's Gulls in the collection of Dr. Jonathan Dwight, Jr., which showed at once that it belonged to that species. This is the first record of the bird for Pennsylvania and I believe the second for the Atlantic coast.—WITMER STONE, *Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, Pa.*

The Black-backed Gull (*Larus marinus*) **on Long Island, N. Y., in August.**—Near Jones Inlet, on August 14, 1910, I collected an adult female of this species. As this bird does not make its appearance on Long Island until the cold weather sets in, late in the fall, this early date appears to be a rare exception. The bird was moulting heavily, especially the primaries, so that it was unable to fly more than about 15 yards at a time. The fact that the specimen was moulting after having migrated instead of moulting before the migration period is quite unusual.—J. A. WEBER, *Palisades Park, N. J.*

Phætusa magnirostris Licht. in Cuba.—On May 28, 1909, I secured an immature specimen of *Phætusa magnirostris* Licht. in the Laguna del Centeno, Nipe Bay, Oriente Province, Cuba. This is the first record for the species in Cuba, there being no doubt as to its identity, for it has been compared by Messrs. Frank M. Chapman and W. DeW. Miller at the American Museum of Natural History. This tern was the only one seen in the lagoon at the time.—CHARLES T. RAMSDEN, *Guantanamo, Cuba.*

Ixobrychus exilis in Texas.—On March 24, 1911, I received a Least Bittern (coll. H. K. C. No. 15026 ad. ♂) in the flesh from Capt. S. W. F. Hase, U. S. A., Fort Crockett, Texas, with the interesting information: "This morning while on a hike I ran across a flock of birds. One of them, apparently a young one, froze himself to the ground, stretching his long bill upward, and I had difficulty in seeing him among the yellow flowers. I placed my sabre across his feet, and picking him up, stuck him through the head."—HENRY K. COALE, *Highland Park, Ill.*

Egret in Northern New Jersey.—On August 7, 1911, as I was motoring past a meadow at Coleville, N. J., which is a small village situated five miles from Sussex, N. J., I saw an Egret. The altitude of Coleville is 800 feet. Three and a half miles distant is the highest point in the State, the height of which is 1809 feet. Coleville is four and a half miles from the New York and New Jersey state line, and six miles from the Delaware River.—JOHN DRYDEN KUSER, *Bernardsville, N. J.*

Yellow Rail (*Coturnicops noveboracensis*).—I recently examined a specimen of this somewhat obscurely known rail that was secured April 22, 1911, in Ecorse Township, Wayne County, Michigan. Mr. Arthur

Borck and a companion were gunning through a piece of tangled weedy low ground when the rail flushed from almost under their feet, and, by a lucky shot, was secured. The bird was mounted when I saw it and the sex is not known. This is the second recorded Michigan specimen, and the third noted in Wayne County, as a female was secured alive by a dog, and another flushed March 25, 1908 (see Taverner, *Auk*, 1908, p. 327).

I do not, however, consider that the species is as rare as these few records would seem to demonstrate, but that its skulking habits and the almost total inability to flush it render observation very unlikely. Here on Grosse Isle, a few miles below Detroit, I am positive that it occurs. Since May, 1907, I have heard, during April-June, notes that are so similar to those described for this species, which, taken together with the kind of marsh occupied, render it highly probable that the notes belong to a Yellow Rail. The territory in question is a wet low field, grown up with a coarse tangled mass of grasses, weeds, and sedges, similar to the kind of ground usually occupied by Henslow's Sparrows. Repeated attempts to flush the birds have failed but the services of a good dog would probably be more effective. The notes are somewhat similar to the effect produced by taking a small bottle in one hand, and tapping it lightly and slowly with a stone twice, with a short interval, repeated half a dozen times.

This species has been found in June in the low marshy territory at the mouth of the Thames River, Lake St. Clair, Ont., by Mr. W. E. Saunders. On this ground, on June 10, 1905, we heard notes which Saunders declared to be those of a Yellow Rail. We made several attempts to flush the bird by dashing quickly at the spot from different directions, but failed.—B. H. SWALES, *Grosse Isle, Mich.*

The Semipalmated Sandpiper in Philadelphia County, Pa.—On October 3, 1910, the writer examined three Semipalmated Sandpipers (*Ereunetes pusillus*) in the possession of a gunner, who shot the birds on the Delaware River meadows, at Bridesburg, Philadelphia County, Pa. One of these birds, a male, which is now in my collection, was generously given to me by the gunner, who, however, refused to part with the others, and what eventually became of them I do not know, but doubt if they were preserved.

This is the only authentic record of the occurrence of the Semipalmated Sandpiper in Philadelphia County, to my knowledge. There are, however, numerous unreliable records of birds *seen*, but this species so closely resemble the Least Sandpiper, with which it intimately associates, in coloration and habits, that it is practically impossible to distinguish between the two species in the field.—RICHARD F. MILLER, *Harrowgate, Philadelphia, Pa.*

The Golden Plover (*Charadrius dominicus dominicus*) on the Coast of South Carolina.—I shot on November 4, 1911, near Mount Pleasant, a fine adult male specimen of this now rare species, which was searching



1912. "Yellow Rail (*Coturnicops noveboracensis*).*" The Auk* 29, 100–101.
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