

**The Baltimore Oriole in Massachusetts in November.**—On Nov. 15, 1885, I shot a male Baltimore Oriole (*Icterus galbula*), in perfect plumage and condition, while feeding upon frozen apples in an orchard. I send this account of the late appearance of this bird, which usually leaves us in September, thinking that it may be worthy of record in 'The Auk.'—CHAS. E. INGALLS, *East Templeton, Mass.*

***Icterus galbula* in Connecticut in November.**—A young male was shot in my dooryard Nov. 15, 1885. It was in good condition and showed no signs of ever having been caged. It was seen about my grounds several days previous to the above date.—JNO. H. SAGE, *Portland, Conn.*

**The Vernacular Name of *Plectrophenax hyperboreus*.**—The specific name of this species was chosen in consequence of the supposition, recently proven to be erroneous, that "the summer home . . . is probably the unknown region to the north of the Arctic mainland, since, at the extreme northern point of Alaska [Point Barrow] only the true *P. nivalis* breeds." The American Ornithologists' Union Committee on Classification and Nomenclature decided upon 'Polar Snowflake' as a more suitable vernacular name for the species than that of McKay's Snow Bunting, originally bestowed upon it; but since we now have positive evidence (the nature of which I am not at present at liberty to explain) that its breeding habitat is not polar, and is in fact considerably south of the Arctic Ocean, I would suggest that the species be called McKay's Snowflake, "in memory of Mr. Charles L. McKay, who sacrificed his life in the prosecution of natural history investigations in Alaska, and in whose collections the new species was first noticed." (Cf. Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., Vol. VII, pp. 68-70.)—ROBERT RIDGWAY, *Washington, D. C.*

**Ipswich Sparrow in Texas.**—I have in my collection an adult male *Ammodramus princeps* taken at Dallas, Texas, Dec. 10, 1884. I obtained it from Mr. Fred. T. Jencks of Providence, who writes me in regard to it as follows: "The Ipswich Sparrow was purchased from the collector, Mr. Clothrie Pierce, for a Western Grass Finch, and it was so labelled until the day I picked out your series of Sparrows, when I detected its true identity." This largely extends the habitat of this comparatively new species, heretofore only recognized on the sand hills of the Atlantic Coast.—GEO. B. SENNETT, *American Museum of Natural History, New York.*

**Occurrence of the Ipswich Sparrow (*Ammodramus princeps*) in Nova Scotia.**—A short time ago I forwarded to Mr. Montague Chamberlain of St. John, N. B., a Sparrow for identification, and he has kindly returned it with the intimation that it is an example of the Ipswich Sparrow (*Ammodramus princeps*), a bird which has never before been included in our fauna. I shot the specimen while after Ducks on the Coast at Lawrence-town, near Halifax, about the end of March, 1878, as it was feeding on

seeds among the bent grass near the shore. Mr. Chamberlain informs me that its only known breeding place is Sable Island, which is but 80 miles out at sea from our coast; it may therefore breed on some part of our eastern seaboard between Cape Sable and Cape Breton. Not being aware of the rarity of the species, I did not search for more at the time, but I am almost positive that I have seen other specimens since. However, I hope next spring to be able to prove that it is not so rare a bird, at least in this Province, as it is supposed to be.—T. MATTHEW JONES, *Halifax, N. S.*

**The Lark Finch in New Jersey.**—On November 26, 1885, while collecting at Schraalinburgh, N. J., within about six miles of the New York State line, I captured a female Lark Finch (*Chondestes grammacus*). It was in excellent condition, the moult just completed. The appearance of this bird, so far from its natural habitat, was without doubt caused by the severe storm of November 21-24, which, arising in Western Kansas and traveling at an average speed of forty miles an hour, in at first a south easterly, and then northeasterly direction, became, November 24, central on the New Jersey coast near Atlantic City.—FRANK M. CHAPMAN, *Englewood, N. J.*

**The Winter Distribution of the Swamp Sparrow and the Yellow-rump.**—On pages 380 and 381 of the last volume of 'The Auk,' Mr. Arthur P. Chadbourne has something further to say with respect to the wintering of Swamp Sparrows in Massachusetts and of Yellow-rumps in Maine, during the season of 1884-85. Mr. Chadbourne intimates that he is willing to have the question made one of evidence, and repeats with some changes of phraseology the information he has previously (*Auk*, Vol. II, p. 216) brought forward on the subject of the Sparrows, without, however, the addition of any new facts. This information is in brief as follows: Four Swamp Sparrows were seen by a collector in Cambridge on December 29, 1884, and one of them was shot and preserved; *the remains* of another—perhaps one of the original four—were found, not far from the same spot, on January 31, 1885. Upon such ground is based the conclusion that Swamp Sparrows tarried in the vicinity throughout the winter,—a conclusion which is plainly not justified in the light of the facts, that the season was exceptionally severe after the middle of January and exceptionally mild before that date, and that this species has never been shown to remain in Massachusetts throughout any winter season. The claim that in Massachusetts January is a test month for irregular winter residents cannot be made in behalf of the Swamp Sparrow, for the very reason that the bird has as yet no right to a place in that class. To assert that it never will have such a right, is far from my intention. Not much evidence is needed to prove that it can brave the rigors of an entire winter season in Massachusetts; but until the missing links in the chain are produced, no good strict constructionist will admit, I think, that the Swamp Sparrow has been found 'wintering' in that State. Mr. Chadbourne's cita-



Chapman, Frank M. 1886. "Occurence of the Ipswich Sparrow (*Ammodramus Princeps*) in Nova Scotia." *The Auk* 3, 135–136.

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