

French, called my attention to a small bird, which was hopping about in some driftwood at the edge of the water. Getting only a glimpse at it I mistook it for a Yellow Warbler and was about to take up the oars again when it came out in full view and I at once recognized an old friend which I certainly never expected to see in Massachusetts, viz.: the Prothonotary Warbler. It seemed perfectly at home, flitting from twig to twig, jetting its tail, and occasionally chirping sharply. Once it sang in an undertone. It was very tame, and as we sat watching it our boat drifted past within a few yards without alarming it. Finally I shot it. It proved to be an adult male in high plumage. Its skin was well covered with fat, its stomach filled with insects, chiefly beetles. The weather was fine at the time, but on the preceding day an easterly storm of some violence prevailed along the Atlantic coast, from Cape Hatteras to New England. To this storm I doubtless owe the pleasure of adding the Prothonotary Warbler to the fauna of our State, for my specimen is the first that has been reported from Massachusetts, although the bird has occurred once previously in Maine, and once in Rhode Island.—WILLIAM BREWSTER, *Cambridge, Mass.*

Helminthophila leucobronchialis in New Jersey.—A specimen of this hybrid was killed about ten miles from this place by Mr. Auguste Blanchet in the latter part of May, 1859. The entire dorsal plumage is tinged with greenish-yellow; the throat and cheeks are pure white, very lightly tinged with yellowish; upper breast grayish; breast yellow, extending toward the crissum; a small black line through the right eye, a large grayish patch behind the left; wing-bars yellow. The whole plumage resembles somewhat that of the female *H. chrysoptera*, but the grayish on the breast is not so deep.—E. CARLETON THURBER, *Morristown, N. J.*

An Interesting Specimen of Helminthophila.—Mr. E. Carleton Thurber, of Morristown, New Jersey, has kindly sent me for examination a *Helminthophila*, which differs considerably from anything that has been hitherto described, and which is apparently a hybrid between the hybrid *H. lawrencei* and the typical *H. pinus*. It is most like the adult male *H. pinus*, the wing- and tail-markings and general coloring, both above and beneath, being essentially the same. But across the jugulum there is a broad band of heavy black spots, and the black eye-stripe, short and well defined in *pinus*, is in this bird narrowed to a mere line anteriorly, and posteriorly extends to the auriculars, over a portion of which it spreads, forming a dusky or blackish patch more or less broken or overlaid by a plentiful mixture of yellow. The black-spotted space on the jugulum is widest in the middle, narrowing gradually as it approaches the sides. Its greatest width is rather more than one-quarter of an inch. The spots are sub-terminal, all the feathers being tipped, and many of them edged as well, with the rich yellow of the underparts generally. This, of course, tends to conceal the black, but it cannot be entirely concealed by any arrangement of the feathers, and when they are disarranged ever so slightly it is a

conspicuous feature. Its effect is not unlike that seen in young autumnal males of *Dendroica virens*, which have the black of the throat and jugulum more or less similarly overlaid with yellow.

In briefer terms, this interesting bird may be said to be about intermediate in color and markings between typical *pinus*, with its short, narrow eye-stripe and uniformly yellow underparts, and the so-called *H. lawrencei*, which has a broad, black patch extending from the bill through and behind the eye, and the chin, throat, and forepart of the breast solidly black. It forms an important link in the chain of evidence supporting my theory* that *H. pinus* and *H. chrysoptera* frequently interbreed, and that their offspring perpetuate a variously-characterized hybrid stock by breeding back into one or the other parent strains. That this is the only possible way of accounting for the now almost complete series of intermediate specimens connecting the obviously distinct species *H. pinus* and *H. chrysoptera* is to my mind certain, despite the able argument to the contrary lately published† by Mr. Ridgway.

Mr. Thurber tells me that the specimen just described, was shot about May 15, 1884, two miles from Morristown, and exactly four and one-half miles from the place where the type of *lawrencei* was obtained. The sex was not determined, but it is undoubtedly a male. The collector, Mr. Frank Blanchet, has also taken another hybrid of the '*H. leucobronchialis*' type in the same locality [as above recorded by Mr. Thurber].—WILLIAM BREWSTER, *Cambridge, Mass.*

Kirtland's Warbler on St. Helena Island, South Carolina.—Mr. W. W. Worthington, of Shelter Island, New York, has shown me a skin of this Warbler which he has secured for his private collection. The specimen is a male in full plumage and was shot by a native lad on the 27th of April. I had suspected the existence of the species here before, but was unable to secure any specimen. On May 3, while returning to camp without my gun, I observed three specimens near the middle of the Island. They were quite familiar, allowing me to approach cautiously within less than a rod, and seemed to be at home—not tired, and yet anxious to be off, as passing migrants usually are. The notes are of two distinct characters. The first, a song, was uttered with the head held forward and the body quite erect. It bore a striking resemblance to the song of the Yellow-throated Warbler. The second was a loud chipping, uttered while moving about among the bushes, and was kept up for a space of one or two minutes at a time. Resting a few seconds the bird would begin again, creeping about the branches and 'swapping ends' with a quick, jerking movement all the time. Arriving near the top of the bush or the end of the branch he would settle himself and sing two or three times before fluttering to the next bush. All these specimens were in low bushes and seemed to prefer them to trees. For though there were

* Bull. Nutt. Orn. Club, Vol. VI, 1881, pp. 218-225.

† Auk, Vol. II, 1885, pp. 359-363.



Brewster, William. 1886. "An Interesting Specimen of Helminthopila." *The Auk* 3, 411–412. <https://doi.org/10.2307/4625431>.

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