

of my pet changed *instantly*. The horns were thrown back flat against the crown, the eyes glared fiercely, and the stately bird of wisdom, and the humorous vendor of quaint sounds, gave place to the savage bird of prey. As she stood for a moment glaring down upon her victim, moving her head from side to side, as if calculating the distance and the best method of attack, she looked like a veritable fiend. Her first swoop was dodged by the cock, and she then made an attack on the ground. Approaching the now terrified bully of the barn-yard, quick as a flash one claw was thrust out, clutching his neck; throwing him over on his back she quietly held him there until all motion had ceased, which was much sooner than if his head had been chopped off.

Nothing in the shape of fresh fish or flesh is neglected by the Owl when hungry, though her choice is for wild birds, and she will take small animals in preference to beef or mutton. A rat or squirrel is always swallowed whole, and about every second or third day the fur and bones are ejected, rolled into a hard pellet as large as a Grouse's egg. Just before ejecting these pellets the bird's appearance is very distressing. The first time I observed it I thought she must be ill, but as soon as the pellet is out she immediately recovers. If any food remains after her hunger is satisfied, it is carefully hidden away, and if I approach the spot where it has been laid the Owl attacks me most fiercely; flying at my feet, and hitting at them with her wings and claws.

She is very fond of bathing, and during the warm weather will bathe regularly once a day; getting into the large basin I have provided and washing very much after the manner of a Canary. In winter she takes a bath about every three or four days.

I have proven that her hearing is remarkably acute, and that she can see distinctly in the day time, when out of the glare of the sun.

The 'hoot' is made with the bill firmly closed; the air is forced into the mouth and upper part of the throat, the latter being puffed out to the size of a large orange.—JAMES W. BANKS, *St. John, N. B.*

Ducks transporting Fresh-water Clams.—In a conversation with Mr. J. W. Freese of Cambridge in relation to birds transporting bodies in their claws, my attention was called to an interesting observation made by Mr. Eugene Barry of Lynn. As the observation seems an important one, touching a possible cause of the distribution of these mollusks, I have asked Mr. Barry, through the kindness of Mr. Freese, to write out his experience, and from the letter which he has kindly sent in reply the following abstract is made.

While gunning on the Sebec River, Maine, he noticed among a flock of Ducks on the wing, one bird which flew more heavily than the others. This he shot, and on picking it up found a common 'fresh-water clam' attached to the penultimate joint of the 'middle toe.' He cut off the leg with the clam adhering to it, and noticed that the articulation to which the mollusk had fastened itself was chafed as if the clam had clung to it for sometime. After a day or more the leg of the Duck and the clam, which had not yet released its hold, were put into a basin of water, when the

mollusk opened its shell and released the imprisoned foot. Mr. Barry afterwards learned from boys of the neighborhood that the same Duck had been noticed flying about on several mornings and evenings previous to the day upon which he shot it. The clam was probably clinging to the Duck's foot at that time, and had not released its grip even when the Duck lit upon the water, as it must frequently have done in the intervals of time between observation.—J. WALTER FEWKES, *Cambridge, Mass.*

The Lesser Glaucous-winged Gull in New York.—On January 28, 1884, Mr. Edward Root, of Green Island, N. Y., brought to me a Gull, fresh in the flesh, and said he shot it the day before as it sat on the ice by a rift of open water in the Mohawk River, near its junction with the Hudson—at about latitude $42^{\circ} 46'$. The weather had been very cold for about a month. The bird was thin in flesh, weighed only 21 ounces, and had in its stomach merely a few grains of gravel.

When I received the bird the color of its irides was pale grayish brown; of its bill, light watery yellow, with a greenish shade near the base, and a small red spot in a little cloud of dusky on each side of the lower mandible above the angle. The legs and feet were flesh color.

Its measurements were: Length, 23.00 inches; extent, 51.75; wing, 15.75; bill, 1.60; from nostril, .80; from gape, 2.60; height at nostril, .60; at angle, .63; tarsus, 2.20; middle toe and claw, 2.25; tail, 7.00; wings beyond tail, 1.50; diameter of iris, .36.

The bird was a female, and its ovary showed that it had passed through at least one breeding season, and was not very old. In size, plumage, coloration, and wing-markings it seemed similar to the Gulls recently described by Mr. William Brewster (Bull. Nutt. Orn. Club, Vol. VIII, pp. 216-219); and upon submitting the mounted bird to him for examination he informed me that it is what he has named *Larus kumlieni*.—AUSTIN F. PARK, *Troy, N. Y.*

[The specimen above referred to is most nearly like Mr. Welch's, among the four which I have previously seen. The blue of the mantle is similarly deep, and the slate-gray of the primaries perhaps even more extended, the first three feathers having their outer webs almost wholly dark, except terminally, where the characteristic white apical spots, although present, are unusually restricted. In these respects the bird extends the series of known specimens (five in number) a little further towards *glaucescens* proper, thus increasing the probability that *kumlieni* may prove eventually to be merely a geographical race of that species. Nevertheless this is still only a probability, for a wide gap remains to be bridged before the two can be united as conspecies. I may add that Mr. Park's specimen has an unusually short, stout bill, which is further peculiar in having the superior outline of the maxilla almost perfectly straight from the base to the angle.—WILLIAM BREWSTER.]

The Occipital Style of the Cormorant.—This style, which in skeletons is found articulated with the occiput, is in reality the ossified raphe of



Fewkes, Jesse Walter. 1884. "Ducks Transporting Fresh-Water Clams." *The Auk* 1, 195–196. <https://doi.org/10.2307/4067418>.

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