

during a large part of this summer on a chain of three ponds connected by the Patagansett Stream, township of East Lyme, near this village. Two were recorded on July 22, and until August 18 from one to ten were present on one or another of the ponds every day. After August 18 they disappeared until Sept. 7, when two returned and were then seen for the last time.

I personally observed them from July 25 to July 31 inclusive and on the 28 took one, which upon dissection proved to be a female. The crop was full of small fish, species not determinable by reason of decomposition. This specimen is now in the county collection of Mr. James H. Hill, New London.

The birds were not very wild, and gave me an opportunity to watch them from a short distance. It has been sometimes said that they are silent except on the roost, but I heard them on several occasions, while feeding on the pond margins, utter a low chuckling or croaking sound.—P. J. McCook, *Niantic, Conn.*

**Little Blue Heron in Massachusetts.**—The Boston Society of Natural History has recently acquired for its New England Collection, a fine specimen of the Little Blue Heron (*Florida cærulea*). It was shot by Mr. Benjamin Pease on Chappaquiddick Island, Edgartown, Martha's Vineyard, on April 14, 1904. The morning when the bird was shot was cold, the ponds were skimmed with ice, and a snow-storm came two hours after the bird's capture. The specimen is unsexed and is in the blue and maroon plumage. I am indebted to Mr. C. W. Johnson, curator of the Society, for permission to record the above facts.—GLOVER M. ALLEN, *Cambridge, Mass.*

**Description of Second Michigan Specimen of Cory's Least Bittern.**—This bird (*Ardetta neoxena*), taken on the St. Clair Flats May 14, 1904, by Mr. E. Craven of Detroit, Mich., and now in the possession of Mr. J. L. Childs of Floral Park, N. Y., is an adult male in full breeding plumage and shows no very decided departure from what seems to be the typical plumage of the species. A close examination, however, shows both the color aberrations common to this species, and in view of the peculiar interest attached to the variations of individuals of this species, I append the following detailed description of the specimen.

The melanotic tendency is shown only on the head, and is not as erratic in this individual as in many others previously taken, and in the regularity and plan of the black spots resembles specific markings more than aberrant patches. It appears on both sides of the head nearly equally, and a description of one side will do for both, though a close comparison shows that the right side of the head is a little more strongly marked than the left.

The black of the crown shades off softly into the chestnut of the ear coverts, giving that part a peculiarly rich, warm coloring. Below and



behind the eye is a triangular patch of black, its apex following the edge of the bare orbital surface in a thin line to about half way up the eye. The base of the triangle extends backward along the bottom of the ear coverts, fading away at their extremity; and forward, to the angle of the mouth, following the base of the lower mandible in a very fine line until it vanishes in the interramal space beneath.

The albinistic tendency is not as regular in its distribution as the melanotic, and in this respect agrees with the majority of the others that have been taken. On the upper part of the abdominal region, just at the lower edge of the sternum, are two white contour feathers, now springing from opposite sides of the incision made in skinning, but plainly arising from adjoining parts and must have formed a single patch in life. The body down on either side of the taxidermist's cut, and extending for a short distance on either side and from the sternum to the vent is also white.

Each leg is decorated with albino characters. On the left leg there is a patch composed of three feathers showing  $\frac{5}{8}$  inch long and extending from the front slightly over half way around the leg and with the lowest point just touching the bare part of the tibia. On the right leg there are but two white feathers placed a little more towards the outer side and extending over a visible space of  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch by a little less than half way around and not reaching the bare parts by  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch.

All the white is pure and immaculate and not of the creamy coloration seen in corresponding parts of *A. exilis*.—P. A. TAVERNER, *Detroit, Mich.*

**Avocet (*Recurvirostra americana*) in New Jersey.**—A record of the specimen herewith reported has never been made in any ornithological journal, though the label which it carries is now nearly 25 years old. It was shot at Barnegat, on the ocean beach, and the label, written and enclosed in the glass which protects the bird, bears the legend: "Shot by John Fonda at Barnegat, Decoration Day, 1880." Stone's 'Birds of E. Penn. and New Jersey,' 1894, p. 70, mentions but two records, one in 1877 and one in 1886. This specimen is in Mr. Fonda's possession, nearly as fresh as when mounted, at his home, 250 Gates Avenue, Brooklyn, N. Y.—WILLIAM C. BRAISLIN, M. D., *Brooklyn, N. Y.*

**The Turkey Buzzard (*Carthartes aura*) in Maine.**—While driving at Scarboro Beach, Me., on August 5, 1904, my attention was directed to a large bird flying over the woods several hundred yards back from the road. I at first took it to be an eagle but at second glance the characteristic sailing of the bird, with tips of wings raised, left no doubt as to its identity. The Buzzard crossed the road behind us, circling over the salt marshes of the Libby River, and finally recrossed the road directly over our carriage and sufficiently near for us to distinctly see the crimson head and neck.

In replying to a letter sent to Mr. Ora W. Knight for other Maine



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