

admit of a satisfactory collection of its birds being made. The only one obtained of special interest is that now described.

Mr. Ober's note of it is as follows:

"219. 'Black bird,' ♂, Mt. Misery. May 21, 1880.

"General plumage soft, glossy black; chin and throat, top of head and extending back over the eyes on each side, and under tail-coverts rusty red; bill and feet black. Depth of bill  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch.

"Sexes alike; young male different.

"Length,  $8\frac{1}{2}$  inches; wing,  $4\frac{1}{4}$ ; alar extent, 13."

JUNE 10, 1881.

**NOTES ON THE MORTALITY AMONG FISHES OF THE GULF OF MEXICO.**

**By S. H. JOHNSON.**

CUSTOM-HOUSE, CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS,  
*Collector's Office, June 17, 1881.*

Prof. SPENCER F. BAIRD,

*U. S. Commissioner of Fish and Fisheries, Washington, D. C.:*

SIR: Noticing in the Forest and Stream of 9th instant some answers to queries as to the cause of mortality among fishes in the Gulf of Mexico, I make bold to present the result of my observations.

After very heavy rains and overflowing of rivers, the inner bays on the Texas coast suffer a loss of from one-half to three-fourths of their stock of salt-water fish, not including mullet, which live as well in fresh as salt water. In fact land-locked mullet in a fresh-water pond or tank grow to a weight of nine or ten pounds.

Last winter, after a heavy rain and a freeze, *all* the salt-water fish in the *Laguna del Madre* (a large sheet of water lying between Padre Island and the mainland) were found dead on the banks.

We have two causes for destruction of fish here, viz., too much fresh water and too cold weather.

In the lagoon above spoken of, in a long drought, the water gets too salty for the fish, and they become covered with sores, and unless relieved by a rain they die from too much salt.

I have never known any serious mortality among fish on the Gulf coast where there was free flow of water, except during violent storms, when many fish both small and large were beached and killed.

Very respectfully,

S. H. JOHNSON,  
*Collector.*