

of the size and the color of their eyes. The author enumerates 649 'species' (or rather 648, as No. 475 goes out as synonymous with No 482), the names of which are given in Latin and German (often with one or two synonyms appended). In every instance the size of the eye is given in millimeters, separate for ♂ and ♀, if different, followed by a careful statement of the color of the iris and how it varies according to sex and age. About sixty per cent of the statements are based upon the author's own examinations, while for the rest the colors given are taken from the best available sources, and the size estimated, in which case the figures are included in brackets. Anybody who has noticed how our taxidermists generally select eyes at hap-hazard when mounting birds, and how many an otherwise nicely stuffed bird has become an atrocious caricature by the disproportionate size of the eyes, cannot fail to see that this book must be of great service to taxidermists, especially to those of Europe; but until a similar work on American birds be published, it will also be valuable to the taxidermists of this country, for out of a total number of 650 species, Mr. Meves has measured about 150 forms which are absolutely identical or nearly so with birds holding a place in North American ornithological lists. We are happy to say, however, that a similar work is already in preparation for North American birds, giving not only the colors of the irides, but also including measurements of the eyes. Meves's book will at the same time, serve as a handy 'check list' of European (western palæarctic) birds, although the nomenclature is sadly 'eclectic,' arbitrary rejections of old names, because "regelwidrig," as the German ornithologists are pleased to say, being very frequent, and so also the retention of a number of preoccupied names; in some cases the latest innovations have been adopted, while in others the author is "conservative where, according to Mr. Seebohm, he ought to be conservative." His splitting of genera seems equally inconsistent (the genus *Picus* is entirely lost, after the fashion of Sundevall, while *Hirundo* is retained). In some instances already corrected mistakes are perpetuated (as *Pecila kamtschatkensis* Bonap.=Sibirische Sumpfmäuse, p. 10), while on the other hand more recent additions to the European Fauna have been overlooked, as, for instance, *Sitta whiteheadi* Sharpe. We note, that like Sundevall, he follows Linnæi 10th edition (1758), but rejects trinomials.—L, S.

'Water Birds of North America'—'A Few Corrections' Rectified.—Dr. J. G. Cooper's long list of so-called 'corrections' to the 'Water-Birds of North America,' in the January number of the 'The Auk,' calls for comment from me in only a few cases, I having exercised no right of revision or supervision whatever over Dr. Brewer's portion of the work. The particular cases with which I am concerned are the following:—

Mareca americana.—Dr. Cooper says that this species "has not been found breeding in the United States." If he will turn to page 622 of my 'Zoology of the 40th Parallel,' he will see that on June 11, 1869, I collected a nest with 10 eggs of this species on Rabbit Island, in the Great Salt Lake.

Pelecanus californicus.—Dr. Cooper's remarks are apparently intended to discredit the supposed distinctness of the Florida and California Brown Pelicans. He says: "The adult plumage obtained by me at San Diego does not differ from that of Florida birds, but the colors of the bill, pouch, etc., differed from both the Florida and Lower California birds, being intermediate, and quite variable." Upon reference to page 143, Vol. II of the 'Water Birds,' it will be seen that *P. californicus* is described as being "Similar to *P. fuscus*, but decidedly larger, the gular sac, *in the breeding season*,* reddish, instead of greenish," etc., it being explicitly stated that the supposed difference in the color of the nape might "not prove sufficiently constant to serve as a diagnostic character." It will be observed that Dr. Cooper does not mention the date or season when his specimens were obtained, thus depriving his statement of "colors of bill, pouch, etc.," of any weight whatever. Much material examined by me since the publication of the 'Water Birds,' while negating the doubtfully suspected difference in the color of the nape, fully confirms the asserted great and constant difference in size between *P. fuscus* and *P. californicus*, and, so far as the condition of the specimens show anything as to fresh colors of the soft parts, does not disprove the stated difference in this respect.

Cymochorea melania and *C. homochroa*.—There is no more occasion for confounding these exceedingly distinct species than for confounding the Raven and Crow, the difference in size and other particulars being quite as great. The two species are so concisely distinguished in the 'Water Birds' (Vol. II, p. 407), that it is unnecessary to further particularize here.

Puffinus stricklandi.—Dr. Cooper's remarks respecting this species embody several errors of fact as well as wrong deductions. In the first place, nothing can be more certain than that *P. stricklandi* is NOT the young of *P. major*, or that no species of Petrel is, in the same individual, dusky when young and light-colored when adult. (See Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., Vol. V, p. 658.) In the second place, there is no evidence whatever that *P. major* itself occurs in any part of the Pacific Ocean. In short, it is very evident that the species which Dr. Cooper has mistaken for *P. stricklandi* is *P. griseus*; and it is remarkable that this did not occur to him, since it is carefully described and compared with *P. stricklandi* on the very next page.† To unite under one specific name such obviously distinct species

* Not italicized in the original.

† The length of wing given by Dr. Cooper for his specimen, 12 1-4 inches, is not very greatly in excess of the maximum of the same measurement in *P. griseus*, as given in my diagnosis; and, considering the fact that his measurement was probably taken from a fresh or at least recently skinned specimen, while mine was of a thoroughly dried skin, would readily account for the discrepancy, which might also result from a different method of measurement. There is, however, in my description an unfortunate contradiction of the statement that "*P. griseus* is smaller in all its measurements than *P. stricklandi*" in the figures given immediately above. This is explained by the fact that the statement was written when only the type specimen (representing the minimum measurement) was before me, the measurement of the larger one being subsequently interpolated and the contradictory statement inadvertently overlooked.

as the four forms of *Puffinus* involved in these remarks,* may suit the peculiar views of those who would, for some reason best known to themselves, ignore distinctions which Nature has made; but will Dr. Cooper please explain in what matter this method of subversion of facts," or, as he expresses it, "similar combinations of species," would be "advantageous to the study of the water-birds,"—or any other birds, "for that matter?—ROBERT RIDGWAY.

Beckham's Birds of Nelson County, Kentucky.—Mr. Beckham's 'List'† "is based almost entirely" upon his former 'List of the Birds of Bardstown, Nelson County, Ky.,' published in July, 1883, and noticed in the 'Bulletin of the Nuttall Ornithological Club' for October, 1883 (Vol. VIII, pp. 227, 228). Four species only are now added, raising the total number to 171. The present list is essentially a reprint of the earlier one, with some revision of the text, and many changes in the nomenclature. It is quite sumptuously printed, and, the introduction states, was prepared "to accompany Mr. Linny's report on the geology of Nelson County." It is without date, and there is no clue given in the 'separates' to its exact place of publication.—J. A. A.

Beckham on the plumage of *Regulus calendula*.‡—Respecting the presence or absence of the brightly colored crown-patch in different individuals of this species, Mr. Beckham, after an examination of much material, reaches the following conclusions: "(1) that the female does not have this brightly-colored crown, and (2) that some young autumnal males (very likely a large majority of them) do possess this ornament."—J. A. A.

Lawrence on New Species of Birds from Yucatan.—Mr. Gaumer's explorations in Yucatan continue to supply Mr. Lawrence with ornithological material still yielding novelties. In the first§ of the two papers now noticed a new Pigeon is described (*Engyptila vinaccifulva*) from Temax, Yucatan. It is very unlike any other species of the genus, and its light tints give at first sight a suggestion of partial albinism. There are also in this paper further notes on *Engyptila fulviventris* (originally described as *Leptoptila fulviventris*), and on *Chætura gaumeri*.

* The only one in the least doubtful being *P. stricklandi*, which by good authority is considered to be the same species as *P. griseus*—a view of its relationships which, it may perhaps be needless to say, I have reasons for not accepting.

† List of the Birds of Nelson County. By Charles Wickliffe Beckham. 4to., pp. 58. Kentucky Geological Survey. No date. [Sept. 1885.]

‡ Remarks on the Plumage of *Regulus calendula*. By Charles Wickliffe Beckham, Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., Vol. VIII, No. 40, pp. 625-628, Dec. 7, 1885.

§ Description of a New Species of Bird of the Genus *Engyptila*, with Notes on two Yucatan Birds. By George N. Lawrence. Ann. N. Y. Acad. Sci., Vol. IV, No. 8, 271-273.