

SHORT NOTES ON APPEARANCE AND BEHAVIOUR

Gannet.

On September 25th an adult was seen flying round a trawler on which a man was cleaning fish. A flock of Herring Gulls were feeding on the fish offal being thrown overboard; the Gannet landed on the water in the midst of the gull flock, about two yards from the stern of the boat, and appeared to be eating the offal. After about one minute it flew up and circled closely round and over the trawler for eight minutes.

Guillemot.

On May 28th, during a half-hour watch, sixteen Guillemots were seen getting out of the sea on to a sloping rock in the following manner. The birds swam round the base of the rock and with an up surge of the sea would swim over the rock surface and as the water subsided flutter and hop up the rock out of reach of the waves. Individuals sometimes had to make several attempts before succeeding. There were forty-seven Guillemots on the rock but during the period of observation none were seen to fly on to it although a few Razorbills did. The weather was sunny with a West force 2 wind.

On July 11th an adult was caught on a breeding ledge with the outer webs missing on both feet. This was apparently a congenital deficiency.

Razorbill.

On August 11th an oiled adult, followed by a young bird, about two-thirds adult size, were seen swimming along the south coast. The young one was giving the plaintive whistling note usual to chicks on the breeding sites. It had probably been at sea for about two or three weeks or longer and would appear to be still dependent on its parent.

Spotted Flycatcher.

On September 23rd one was seen in Millcombe eating a Red Admiral butterfly (*Pyrameis atalanta*). Having caught the butterfly the flycatcher hit it against the branch on which it was perched. During this operation the butterfly escaped twice and was recaptured. Eventually it was swallowed whole. On other dates in September, Spotted Flycatchers were seen catching Red Admirals.

Lesser Whitethroat.

One seen in Millcombe on four days in October was, on each occasion, observed feeding on berries. On the 13th eating honeysuckle

berries, on the 20th, 21st and 25th eating Elderberries and Blackberries. There was also a Lesser Whitethroat present in Millcombe on five days in November, between the 12th and the 20th, on each occasion it was seen flycatching. It was possibly the same individual seen in November as in October because on November 11th a Whitethroat-like bird was glimpsed on a bramble patch not normally seen on the cruise; on the following day and subsequent days in November, the Lesser Whitethroat was seen in the same area, above the walled gardens, as occupied by the October bird.

Yellowthroat.

On November 4th a first winter male was caught in the Terrace Trap. A detailed description and measurements were taken, also a few feathers. It was ringed and released next day. It was also seen by F. W. Gade, Mary Gade and John Ogilvie. One of the lighthouse keepers from the South Light kindly attempted to photograph it, but the light was extremely poor.

It was about the size of a Willow Warbler. The upperparts were greenish-grey to olive green, very similar to the upperparts of the British leaf warblers. The ear coverts and lores were a mottled grey-black, the individual feathers being black tipped grey. The chin and throat were a brilliant canary yellow grading into a paler cinnamon tinted yellow at the side of the neck. There was also a faintly discernible cinnamon tinted band across the throat. Breast pale yellow grading into pale fawn on the flanks. Belly, pale cream yellow. Under tail coverts yellow tinted cinnamon. The bill was horn coloured, the legs and feet a pale pinkish brown, the eyes a dark brown. The wing, which was of a general round shape and the same colour as the upperparts, was 57 mm. long. The second, third and fourth primaries were of equal length and the longest; the first and fifth primaries were 2.5 mm. shorter than the longest. The ten tail feathers were abraded and pointed. The full measurement details are recorded in the daily log. The fact that the first primary was comparable in length with the second-sixth is itself sufficient to show that the bird was not of an Old World species, in all of which the first primary is very small.

When the bird was released on the window-sill of the bird room, it frequently flitted its wings, the movement being accompanied by a monosyllabic 'chat' like note. Later it was released in the catching cage of the trap where it immediately skulked in the bramble and grass near the ground, 'chatting' continuously while anyone was near.

This species is a common breeding bird in eastern North America, from Quebec to Florida, migrating south in winter. Several very similar sub-species have been described, but it is not possible to treat the Lundy bird trinomially.

Bonelli's Warbler.

This bird was caught on September 1st. It was not seen in the field, but the following description was taken of it in the hand.

The underparts were white. Head grey, ear coverts greyish white, indistinct whitish stripe above the eye. Nape, hind neck and mantle, greyish brown blending to brownish olive green on the back. Rump and upper tail coverts yellowish green. Wing coverts olive brown. Primaries and secondaries olive brown with the leading edges yellow, giving the closed wing a yellowish appearance. Tail feathers olive brown with outer edges yellow. Legs brown, iris dark brown, bill horn coloured.

The following measurements were taken: Wing 65 mm., Bill 9.5 mm., Tarsus 19.5 mm. Total length $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Wing formula: third and fourth primary of equal length and the longest, the fifth slightly shorter. The second primary slightly shorter than the fifth and larger than the sixth. The first primary vestigial, slightly longer than wing coverts.

From these measurements it will be seen that the bird was very similar in shape and size to the Willow Warbler but was quite distinguishable from this species by its very pale colour.

The Skokholm specimen was treated binomially by the B.O.U. List Committee, in accordance with their rule that subspecific assessments should be based on more than one specimen. Because the Lundy bird was released after examination, so that it could not be compared with skins of the two races in question, it too must be treated binomially.

