

Some Notes on Rare Birds.

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THE following very brief notes respecting some birds that are not usual visitants to our county, but which have been seen in Derbyshire in 1878, have been put together with the view of suggesting to the Society the expediency of devoting some few pages of the *Journal*, year by year, to a chronicle of Natural History. If the members and friends of the Society, who may be interested in any branch of Natural History, would contribute short notes of anything remarkable occurring in the year, such a chronicle might become a valuable feature in our transactions.

On the 27th of April, a Gannet (*Pelecanus bassanus*) dropped exhausted in the park of Ednaston Lodge; the bird measured 3 ft. 3 in. from beak to tail, and 6 ft. 2 in. across the expanded wings. The next morning another Gannet was observed hovering about, but continued its flight in the direction of Tutbury. I am not aware that this ocean bird has visited Derbyshire before. April being the season for Gannets to migrate northwards, may possibly account for its appearance.

On Friday, December 20th, a good specimen of the Bohemian Waxwing or Chatterer (*Ampelis garrulus*), in excellent plumage, was shot on the top of the Chevin, Hazelwood. Another bird of the same species was seen in the neighbourhood a few days later. It is stated in Pilkington's *Derbyshire* (vol. i. p. 489), published in 1789, that this bird was shot at Glapwell, Bolsover, "some years ago." He adds that, at "a later time," a flight of fourteen birds was seen at Smalley and at Melbourne. At

Melbourne they were observed to eat the food which had been given to some swine. Glover tells us that several of these birds were shot in January, 1829, in the neighbourhood of Derby. The Waxwing may be fairly considered not only a rare Derbyshire bird, but also among the rarest of those visitants to our shores that are classified as English birds. Several specimens of the Hawfinch or Grosbeak (*Loxia coccythraustes*) were also seen, during the severe frost, in the neighbourhood of Belper, and one in the garden close to the house at Spondon Hall.

Mr. Heath tells us, that in December last a Goosander (*Mergus merganser*) was shot at Borrowash, and two Black-headed Gulls (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) on the Derwent, just below Derby. They had doubtless been driven up the Trent and Derwent by the severe weather, in search of food.

The Teal and the Widgeon have been taken in large numbers, in the south of the county, during the late frosts.