MUSEUM BULLETIN NO. 13.

On August 10, we returned to Percé and finished the remainder of our work, leaving for Ottawa August 23.

DESCRIPTION AND LIFE HISTORY NOTES

OF THE DOUBLE - CRESTED CORMORANT.

The Double-crested Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) belongs to the Steganopodes or Long-winged swimmers, an order characterized by having three fully developed webs to the foot. They are thus easily separated from other orders of swimming birds, the ducks, gulls, loons, etc., which are furnished with only two such webs, the space between the outer and the hind toes being vacant or with partial webs only as in the grebes.

This order of three-web footed birds is composed of five families three of which are represented in Canada by the Gannet or Solan Goose, the Cormorants, and the Pelicans. The cormorants can be easily distinguished from the others by their long, powerful bill terminating in a distinctly hawk-like hooked knob. The bill of the gannet comes to a clean sharp point, while that of the pelican is much flattened and furnished with an enormous throat or gullar pouch.

In eastern Canada we have two cormorants: the Doublecrested (*Phalacrocorax auritus*); and the Common Comorant, identical with the Shag of Europe and England (*Phalacrocorax carbo*). Of these, the latter is slightly the larger and in adult plumage can be separated from the former by the occurrence of a white patch on the flanks and a border of the same colour along the edge of the small throat pouch. The adult Doublecrested Cormorant, in the highest plumage, has a crest, on either side of the crown, of fine filamentous feathers, which is absent on the Common Cormorant. This crest, from which it derives its vernacular name, however, is not always present. It seems that some birds never attain it and others wear it for so short a time in the early breeding season that its value as a diagnostic mark is much reduced.

It is probably due to this frequent absence of a crest, that the cormorant inhabiting the Gaspe coast has heretofore been

2