

*thia alba*). They were easily approached, and, on May 4 and 7, several examples were collected. Both sexes were represented. Most of the birds had attained practically full nuptial plumage. Two male specimens, however, were still in winter plumage, just beginning the prenuptial molt. Most of the birds observed in the field were in breeding plumage but several were noticed which still possessed the winter plumage.—JAMES STEVENSON and WILLIAM B. DAVIS, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, August 18, 1934.*

**Group Vernacular Names.**—May a newcomer who could not take part in the earlier discussions on vernacular names offer his views?

If we are to have an English name for every subspecies then Dr. Grinnell's suggestion (*Condor*, 36, 1934, pp. 165-166) is certainly well worth following. Descriptive or geographical names are far preferable to the present hodgepodge of meaningless personal names.

My experience, however, with beginners, leads me to believe that vernacular subspecific names are a complete nuisance, hindering progress, and causing endless confusion. Anyone who has tried to explain to a novice why the Texas Woodpecker in his old bird book is now called the Cactus Woodpecker, in southern Arizona, will appreciate the difficulties.

The beginner has no use for subspecies, whatever. They belong to the serious student of systematics and animal distribution, and in this type of research the scientific name is sufficient.

It is time that subspecific identifications be restricted to collected specimens. Basing identifications on the published ranges alone is always hazardous and never scientific.

Why not adopt group vernacular names for use in sight identifications? That is, all of the subspecies which collectively constitute a species would be known by one name. In the four examples of the Paridae given by Dr. Grinnell the beginner would have only the four group names to learn. Change of locality would not necessitate learning a new name for a bird indistinguishable from the one he already knows. We can eliminate approximately 600 useless names from the 1931 A. O. U. Check-list, by carrying out this plan.

I know this suggestion is not new, but, so far as I can find, the chief objection to group names is that we are not yet sure of the definition of a species, and further changes would occur as our knowledge advances. I believe, however, that the number of such doubtful cases is comparatively small and will soon be reduced to an insignificant figure.

This condensation into group names will give us a rational uniformity in nomenclature. Its simplicity will encourage the beginner in bird study, and our elusive subspecies will be left for those who are competent to handle them.—ANDERS H. ANDERSON, *Tucson, Arizona, August 24, 1934.*

**Ten-year-old Passerines.**—In the July, 1934, number of the *Condor*, p. 170, E. L. Sumner, Sr., in recording his ten-year-old Wren-tit, states that he "can find no other record of a passerine bird in a wild state living to this age." I have found records of seven such birds of five species as follows: male Purple Finch (*Carpodacus p. purpureus*) 10 years (Magee, *Bird-Banding*, 1, 1930, p. 191); two male Cardinals (*Richmondia c. cardinalis*) 10 years (Lincoln, *Fifty Years' Progress of American Ornithology*, 1933, pp. 86-87, and Ganier, *Wilson Bull.*, 45, 1934, p. 152); Blue Jay (*Cyanocitta c. cristata*) 12½ years (*Bird-Banding Notes*, 2, no. 10); Starling (*Sturnus v. vulgaris*) nearly 16 years (Jirsík, *Der Zug des auf dem Gebiet der czechoslovakischen Republik nistenden Stares Sturnus v. vulgaris*, *Massarykova Akademie Práce*, 1933); and Carrion Crow (*Corvus corone*), the male at least 11 years old, the female at least 13 (Poncy, *Alauda*, 1932, pp. 398-406; also a letter). All of the above birds were banded except the crows, which, being permanent residents in the *Jardin des Anglais* at Geneva, were positively identified by injuries to their feet in 1924 and 1922 respectively. Fuller details as to all of these birds, except the Purple Finch, have been given in the April and July, 1934, numbers of *Bird-Banding* in the reviews on longevity.—MARGARET M. NICE, *Amherst, Massachusetts, September 1, 1934.*