

latest edition of the A. O. U. Check-List discussing in detail his reasons for differing from the A. O. U. Committee in the distribution of several species. We note the following cases where Mr. Willett's evidence leads him to differ with the statements of the Check-List.

Brachyramphus marmoratus is stated in the Check-List to range south to San Diego in winter but Mr. Willett can find no record south of Santa Barbara.

Brantha canadensis occidentalis is credited with ranging to southern California in winter but there seems to be no record for the region covered by the present paper.

Oreortyx picta plumifera is considered by Mr. Willett, to include all southern California birds. Those from the San Gabriel and San Bernardino Mountains are referred to *O. p. confinis* in the Check-List but Messrs. Grinnell and Swarth after careful study of the matter would refer all to *plumifera*.

Following the opinion of Messrs. Ridgway and Oberholser he excludes *Empidonax griseus* from California referring the birds so called to *E. wrighti*.

Aphelocoma californica obscura is also excluded from California, the birds breeding from Los Angeles to San Bernardino which are referred to this form in the Check-List, proving to be, in the opinion of Messrs. Grinnell and Swarth, referable to *A. c. californica*.

Careful local studies of this kind are just what are needed to straighten out the details in the distribution of our birds, and Mr. Willett's contribution is most welcome.

We note but few topographical or other errors, but since the author invites corrections we may mention that the Avocets noted by Dr. Newberry (p. 35) were in the winter of 1855 not 1885 and the Audubon reference on p. 71 should be to the Ornithological Biography not the Elephant Folio. We might also call attention to an earlier publication of Evermann's 'Birds observed in Ventura County, Cal.' which appeared in Vol. 1, No. 8 (Jan. 1886), pp. 77-89, of the *Pacific Science Monthly*, a small journal edited by Stephen Bowers, Ph.D., and published at San Buenaventura, Cal., apparently as the organ of the Ventura Society of Natural History.

This title does not appear in Grinnell's Bibliography of California Ornithology. Except as to nomenclature the paper is essentially the same as that in 'The Auk' for 1886. *Polioptila melanura* however, is included (erroneously) as a rare resident.— W. S.

Mathews' Birds of Australia.¹— Three parts of this monumental work have been received since the last notice in 'The Auk.' Part 6 of Volume I, bearing date, January 31, 1912, consists of title page, contents, preface and index of the first volume, while Part 1 of Volume II, May 30, 1912, and Part 2 of Volume II, July 31, 1912, comprising 236 pages and 27 plates are devoted to the Petrels.

¹ The Birds of Australia. By Gregory M. Mathews. With hand-coloured Plates. Roy. 4to. Witherby and Co., London.

The high standard set in Volume I is maintained in the parts before us, both plates and letter press being beautifully executed, while the history, synonymy and relationship of the various species are treated at length. As Mr. Mathews states in the preface to Volume I, the accounts of the life history of some species are necessarily meagre on account of the lack of reliable information; a condition that is familiar to compilers of life histories of birds in other countries as well as Australia, and one that should be constantly remembered by field ornithologists. Mr. Mathews' work may leave little to be said on the systematic side of Australian ornithology but the members of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists' Union will still have a wide field open to them in completing the accounts of the life and habits of their birds.

The recently rediscovered Solander manuscripts are reprinted as well as other matter relative to the early descriptions and discoveries of Petrels, and as is usual in the author's investigations he finds quite a number of races which he regards as separable, many of them from outside of Australian waters.

We note the following new forms described in the parts now before us. In part 1: *Oceanites oceanicus exasperatus*, New Zealand Seas; *Oceanites nereis couesi*, Kerguelen Isl.; *O. n. chubbi*, Falkland Isl.; *Pelagodroma marina dulciae*, W. Australia; *P. m. maoriana*, Chatham and Aukland Isls.; *P. m. howei*, E. Australia; *Fregetta tubulata*, 'Gould' ms., Australian coast; *Puffinus couesi*, Californian coast; *P. assimilis kempfi*, Chatham Isls.; *P. a. tunneyi*, W. Australian, *P. lherminieri boydi*, Cape Verde Isls.; *P. l. becki*, Culpepper and Wenman Isls., Galapagos; *P. l. nugax*, 'Solander' ms., Queensland; *Puffinus reinholdi*, New Zealand; *P. r. huttoni*, Snares Isl., N. Z. *P. pacificus hamiltoni*, Seychelles; *P. p. alleni*, San Benedicto Coast of California; *P. p. laysani*, Laysan; *P. p. royanus*, E. Australia; *P. carneipes hullianus*, Norfolk Isl.; *P. c. hakodate*, Japan; *P. c. carbonarius* 'Solander' ms.; *Procellaria equinoctialis mixta*, Cape Seas; *P. a. steadi*, New Zealand; *P. a. brabournei*, West Coast, S. A. In part 2:

Pagodroma confusa, Cape Adare, Victoria Land; *Macronectes giganteus solanderi*, Falkland Isls.; *M. g. halli*, Kerguelen Isl.; *M. g. wilsoni*, Ross Sea; *M. g. forsteri*, west coast of South America; *Prion vittatus keyteli*, Tristan d'Acunha, *P. v. gouldi*, Bass Strait; *P. v. macgillivrayi*, St. Paul's, Indian Ocean; *P. v. missus*, W. Australia; *Pseudoprion turtur eatoni*, Kerguelen; *P. t. solanderi*, west coast South America; *P. t. huttoni*, Chatham Isls.; *P. t. crassirostris*, Bounty Isls.; *Heteroprion belcheri*, coast of Victoria; *H. desolatus mattingleyi*, E. Australian Seas; *H. d. perrugneyi*, Cape Seas; *H. d. macquariensis*, Macquarie Isl.; *H. d. alter*, Auckland Isls. Three new genera are proposed as follows *Freggettornis*, type *Freggetta grallaria*; *Nesofreggetta*, type *F. maestissima*; *Heteroprion*, type *H. belcheri*.

Mr. Mathews points out that *Freggetta leucogaster* Gould should replace *F. grallaria* Vieill. in the A. O. U. Check-List, the two being separable and the latter restricted to Australian waters. *Puffinus auricularis* Towns. he regards as identical with *P. opisthomelas* Coues, while the bird generally

so called is renamed *P. couesi*. *P. griseus* is again subdivided, our Atlantic form being *P. g. stricklandi*, while our Pacific form is *P. g. chilensis*. Taken altogether these parts of Mr. Mathews' work constitute one of the most important contributions to our knowledge of the Procellariiformes that has yet appeared.— W. S.

The Austral Avian Record No. 3.¹— In this number Mr. Mathews discusses the coloration of the head and neck of the Australian Cassowary and some rare publications by S. Diggles on new Australian birds. Another list of additions and corrections to the author's 'Reference List' of the birds of Australia also appears containing twenty-two additional new subspecies.— W. S.

Bryant on The Present and Future Status of the California Valley Quail.²— The investigation reported in this paper shows conclusively that the preservation of this well known game bird is likely to be seriously threatened if present conditions in California continue. The increase in gunners, extension of agriculture and destruction of cover are shown to be the most serious factors.

The issue of 12,500 hunting licenses in southern California in 1910, and the merciless slaughter of Quail by market gunners and others in the past, clearly show where lies the responsibility for the decrease in numbers that Mr. Bryant has reported. All aspects of the question are carefully considered and steps for the furnishing of food and cover, and for limiting the amount of hunting, so that the annual destruction does not exceed the production of young, are recommended.— W. S.

Grinnell's Systematic List of the Birds of California.³— The object of this publication seems to be to present a list of Californian Birds in a sequence which the author regards as representing the most modern ideas of classification — *i. e.* as presented in Knowlton's 'Birds of the World.' As in Mr. Grinnell's previous catalogue, many races described by him but not recognized in the A. O. U. Check-List are included. Useful as the list is in illustrating a modern system of classification it is to be hoped, as a matter of convenience to all American Ornithologists, that it be not followed in future publications of the Cooper Ornithological Club. In faunal lists matters of classification are of secondary importance as compared with the great convenience of uniformity of sequence. Mr. Grinnell's list enumerates 530 species and subspecies, 55 of which are regarded as of casual or accidental occurrence.— W. S.

¹ The Austral Avian Record, Vol. I, No. 3. Witherby & Co., London. June 28, 1912.

² The Present and Future Status of the California Valley Quail. By Harold C. Bryant. The Condor, Vol. XIV, July, 1912, pp. 131-142.

³ A Systematic List of the Birds of California. Pacific Coast Avifauna, No. 8, Cooper Ornithological Club, Hollywood, Cal. August 30, 1912. pp. 1-23.