

The summary of the spring migration is fuller than usual owing to a material increase in the corps of observers, and there are the 'Abstract of Proceedings,' 'Bibliography' and 'Club Notes.' Under the last appears an account of the Twenty-fifth anniversary dinner of the Club on January 7, 1915, at which 66 members and seven guests were present. The average attendance at the meetings during 1914 was approximately 24.—W. S.

**Publications on Bird Protection.**—Mr. E. H. Forbush's annual report<sup>1</sup> as state ornithologist of Massachusetts is, as usual, full of interesting facts and valuable suggestions. Among other things he shows the effect of birds in checking the ravages of the army worm, the effect of the destruction of ducks, herons and other aquatic birds on the abundance of mosquito larvæ and the prevalence of diseases transmitted by these insects. Ducks at least are known to devour mosquito larvæ in quantities. The European Starling and the havoc it causes in the orchards by pecking apples and pears and devouring cherries are also considered at length.

The Alabama Bird Day Book for 1915<sup>2</sup> for which the Commissioner of Game and Fish, Mr. John H. Wallace, Jr., is responsible, is as usual admirably fitted for its purpose, replete with short sketches and poems suitable for Bird Day celebrations and illustrated by some of the Mumford color plates of familiar species. Alabama stands well in the lead among the states of the Union in furthering the observance of Bird Day.—W. S.

**Bird Enemies of two Beetle Pests.**—The huisache (*Acacia farnesiana*) a favorite shade tree in the southwest is damaged by a longicorn beetle (*Oncideres putator*). "It is believed that the Southern Downy Woodpecker (*Dryobates pubescens*) and probably also the Texas Woodpecker (*Dryobates scalaris bairdi*) attack the larvæ. While neither of these birds has been found with larvæ, they have been observed at work on branches that contained numerous larvæ of this insect and have left empty chambers behind."<sup>3</sup>

A click beetle, seriously injurious to corn, oats and cotton, is reported upon by entomologists of the South Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station. They report that in both 1912 and 1913 "the elytra of this beetle were recognized in the excrement of a Nighthawk, presumably *Chordeiles virginianus*. These elytra were found to be very frequent in the excrement of this bird in a field of tasseling corn where thousands of these

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<sup>1</sup> Seventh Annual Report of the State Ornithologist [of Massachusetts] for the Year 1914, Sixty-second Ann. Rept. State Board of Agr., pp. 1-31. January 13, 1915.

<sup>2</sup> Alabama Bird Day Book. Issued by Department of Game and Fish. John H. Wallace, Jr., Commissioner; Miss Sophia Watts, Secretary. [Montgomery, Ala.]

<sup>3</sup> High, M. M. The huisache girdler. Bull. 184, U. S. Dept. of Agric., April 8, 1915, p. 8.

beetles had congregated.”<sup>1</sup> Records of the Biological Survey show this beetle to be devoured by the following additional species of birds: Killdeer, Least Flycatcher, Starling, Orchard Oriole, English Sparrow, Gray-cheeked Thrush and Robin.— W. L. M.

**Dissemination of the Chestnut-blight Fungus.**—In ‘The Auk’ for January, 1915,<sup>2</sup> the writer reviewed a paper on birds as carriers of the chestnut-blight fungus.<sup>3</sup> It was then remarked that “the part birds play in the general spread of the disease is so small that it will never be seriously urged as a reason for diminishing bird protection.” If further argument were needed to buttress this position, it is available in abundance in a paper by the same authors (plus one) on “Air and wind dissemination of Ascospores of the Chestnut-blight Fungus.”<sup>4</sup>

Two paragraphs of their conclusions are quoted: “In and near badly diseased chestnut groves or forests the number of ascospores falling on each square foot of exposed surface following a period of rain, as indicated by exposure plates, is very large and is sufficient to offer abundant opportunity for new infections.”

“All of these experiments point to air and wind transport of the ascospores of the chestnut-blight fungus as one of the very important methods of dissemination. . . . It can now be said with absolute certainty that following each warm rain of any amount ascospores are carried away from diseased trees in large numbers. Since they have been obtained in large numbers at distances of 300 to 400 feet from the source of supply, the conclusion of the authors that they may be carried much greater distances is justified. During dry periods wind dissemination of ascospores does not occur at all or sinks to a very insignificant minimum.”

If the blight is freely distributed by so omnipresent an agency as the wind, the part that birds play in the dissemination must be reckoned as comparatively unimportant.— W. L. M.

### The Ornithological Journals.<sup>5</sup>

**Bird-Lore.** XVII, No. 2. March–April, 1915.

Bird-Life in Southern Illinois. III. Larchmound: A Naturalist's Diary. By Robert Ridgway.

A Mysterious Bird of the Marsh. By Verdi Burtch.— A study of the Bittern with excellent photographs.

<sup>1</sup> Conradi, A. F. & Eagerton, H. C. The spotted click beetle (*Monocrepidius vespertinus* Fab.). Bull. 179, Dec. 1914, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. XXXII, No. 1, p. 119.

<sup>3</sup> Journal Agr. Research, II, No. 6, Sept., 1914, pp. 405–422.

<sup>4</sup> Journ. Agr. Research, III, No. 6, March, 1915, pp. 493–525.

<sup>5</sup> The name of the editor and publisher of each journal will be found in the January number of ‘The Auk.’