

birds to a remarkable degree and the songs and call notes are usually brought into the verse in a very clever manner. Poems are often remembered where prose is forgotten and are moreover particularly attractive to many persons, especially children, so that Miss Ball's book will carry the message of bird study to many who would probably not otherwise receive it.

The various species are arranged in the order of spring arrival beginning with the residents and winter visitants, while tables of arrival and departure dates are interspersed. The numerous colored plates make the work an attractive picture book. Many of these are from the leaflets of the National Association of Audubon Societies, and are referred to in the preface as "Audubon plates" — a rather confusing term — while the rest are drawn by Mr. Bruce Horsfall especially for this work. We trust that Miss Ball's work will meet with the appreciation that it deserves.—  
W. S.

**Gilmore's 'Birds of Field, Forest and Park.'** — This attractively gotten-up book<sup>1</sup> is intended to give the would-be nature student an intimate knowledge of our wild bird life. It is distinctly popular in character and covers the birds of the eastern United States as observed by the author at his home in Maine, as well as in New York, New Jersey and "in the Southern States." While usually careful to mention localities the writer occasionally forgets to tell us to which region his observations pertain, an important matter in a work of such wide scope.

Mr. Gilmore is an entertaining writer and a good observer and his accounts of the habits of the birds he has personally observed are well done and full of interest, and especially attractive are the chapters entitled "In the Orchard" and "The Wilderness in June" where the attempt at systematic arrangement of the subject matter is abandoned and he writes of nature as he finds her.

There is always a field for nature books which stimulate the interest of the reader and the main text of Mr. Gilmore's book will give much pleasure and information to a wide circle of readers.

Unfortunately where he has had occasion to compile his information and to write upon the wider problems of ornithology his results have not been so happy — indeed the first two chapters, being largely of this character, could, it seems to us, have been omitted with advantage in a work of this kind. It is here that we find a number of unfortunate statements. Young Grackles, for instance, do not have "spotted coats," nor does the young male bird in species in which the sexes differ in color, "resemble the father, and the young female the mother;" while we cannot agree that in the

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<sup>1</sup> *Birds of Field, Forest and Park*, By Albert Field Gilmore, with a Foreword by T. Gilbert Pearson, Secretary of The National Association of Audubon Societies, with Illustrations by R. Bruce Horsfall and Louis Fuertes. The Page Company. Boston, MDCCC-XIX, 8vo., pp. i-xii+1-318, numerous half-tone and several colored plates. \$2.50 net.

Sparrow family "there is little or no difference in the colors of the male and female," the Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Blue Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting and Nonpariel being familiar examples to the contrary. Perching birds, the author tells us, have "short legs with slender toes having many joints, the better to cling to the perch," but he will find that the other groups with which he contrasts them have just as many "joints," birds being remarkably constant in this respect and the exceptions few. Again we are told that in the autumn the gay suits of the males of many species "are doffed and sober colored coats better adapted for travel are put on." Had the author paused to think he must have realized that these very birds had traveled successfully in their brilliant spring garb on the northward flight and he would have sought some other reason for the change. There is throughout, a misleading use of the word "variety" for "species." These terms have distinct meanings in natural history and such careless usage tends to bewilder the reader. The author's idea of what is meant by classification is decidedly hazy, since he states that the classification of the A. O. U. is adopted, but apart from the fact that the members of some of the larger groups like the Sparrows and Woodpeckers are arranged together there is no attempt at classification whatever.

These and other misstatements can easily be corrected in another edition but it is a great pity that the book was not placed in the hands of some competent critic before publication, as was done in the case of Mr. Moseley's little work. Mr. Pearson's foreword is well enough as an exposition of the importance of bird study but it is obvious that he was not given the opportunity of reading the manuscript. The illustrations are in part from the leaflets of the National Association of Audubon Societies while others are early efforts of Mr. Fuertes which appeared originally in 'Citizen Bird' and elsewhere.—W. S.

**Stephens on the Birds of San Diego County, California.**—This well printed list<sup>1</sup> covers 320 species and subspecies which the author has established as having occurred in the county. The annotations are brief and describe the general nature of the bird's occurrence with data for rare captures, while under the family headings are given some mention of the habits of the species. Mr. Stephens is a well known authority on the birds of the region of which he writes and his list is an important addition to the literature of California ornithology. By a slip of the compositor we notice that the Nevada Cowbird appears in the Corvidæ instead of with its allies in the Icteridæ.—W. S.

**Swarth on New Subspecies of *Passerella iliaca*.**—An exhaustive study of the Californian Fox Sparrows leads Mr. Swarth to separate<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> An Annotated List of the Birds of San Diego County, California. By Frank Stephens. Transactions San Diego Society of Natural History, Vol. 3, No. 2, pp. 142-180. February 15, 1919.

<sup>2</sup> Three New Species of *Passerella iliaca*. By H. S. Swarth. Proc. Biol. Soc. Wash., Vol. 31, pp. 161-164. December 30, 1918.