

widely separated from one another as they are from islands in which another form occurs.

These are the sort of facts brought out by such a study as Mr. Swarth has made, and they are the vindication of this kind of research. The mere establishment of a subspecies for the sake of proposing a new name has little to recommend it.

The discussion under each race is very full and there are frequent maps showing breeding and winter ranges together with outline cuts of bills and wings and a list of some 1600 specimens used in the study. There are several half-tones illustrating habitats and a beautiful colored plate by Allan Brooks. Attractive as is this plate, however, we think that for the purposes of such a study as this a more diagramatic plate would have been better with heads all pointed the same way so that comparisons could be more readily made.

One more thought occurs which is no reflection upon Mr. Swarth's admirable paper, and that is: could not the results have been presented more briefly and is it necessary to list every specimen used in such a study? In these days of the high cost of printing the author who can adequately express his ideas in the fewest words is setting the example that we need for it is no easy matter today to secure the publication of such a monograph as Mr. Swarth has produced.—W. S.

Griscom and Nichols on the Seaside Sparrows¹.—The authors of this paper seem to have had a much more difficult problem before them than had Mr. Swarth in the Fox Sparrows, and while they do not pretend to have settled it and have only devoted a few pages to its consideration they seem to us to have come pretty close to grasping the underlying principle which is responsible for the development of the puzzling series of forms into which the group is divided. The cropping out of dark-colored races between two of much lighter tone along the Florida and Gulf coasts, precludes any idea of a gradual change from one extreme to another, and the authors' suggestion that it is the character of the local salt marsh environment that is responsible, seems most plausible. Birds which live almost entirely in the shelter of grass or scrubby bushes must be strongly affected by the character of this vegetation, the more open bushes, admitting more light tend to produce light colored forms while denser vegetation would be likely to produce darker birds. It is indeed the problem of the dense forest and scrub growth in miniature and another illustration of the close affinity of botany and ornithology in solving evolutionary problems.

The material at the authors' command was, however, insufficient to demonstrate positively this association of environment with subspecies or to show whether or not the several forms adhere strictly to the limits

¹ A Revision of the Seaside Sparrows. By Ludlow Griscom and J. T. Nichols, *Abst. Proc. Linn. Soc. N. Y.*, No. 32, pp. 18-30, November 3, 1920.

of their peculiar environments or spread beyond the barriers as Mr. Swarth tells us that the Fox Sparrows do. Quite likely, however, it is some other factor that has played a part in differentiating the Fox Sparrows and not immediate physical barriers.

Messrs. Griscom and Nichols have recognized nine forms of the Seaside Sparrows, two of which, *Passerherbulus mirabilis* from Cape Sable and *P. nigrescens* from Merrit Island, Florida, are recognized as species while the others are considered as subspecies of *P. maritimus*. Two are described as new, *P. m. howelli* (p. 22), ranging along the Gulf coast of Alabama and Mississippi, and *P. m. juncicola* (p. 25), from East Goose Creek, Wakulla County, Florida.—W. S.

Silloway on the Birds of the Palisades Interstate Park.—This pamphlet,¹ intended as a guide-book to the bird life in certain sections of the Palisades Interstate Park begins with an account of its physical features and the prominent points of interest, with numerous excellent photographic illustrations. The ornithological portion consists of two annotated lists, one for the vicinity of Bear Mountain, containing sixty species; the other for the vicinity of the Guest House, with sixty-one species, both based upon field studies made during the year 1918, with a supplementary list of nineteen species added during 1919.

The annotations consist of notes on nests and breeding birds observed by the author, and some general information regarding the habits of the various species. With some of the author's statements we can hardly agree; as when he says that the Chat "is a mocking warbler, and owing to the character of its noisy imitations the hearer usually refers the calls to the species imitated and does not suspect the presence of the Chat." We think that anyone at all familiar with the notes of the Chat will recognize them instantly and will not be likely to take them for the imitation of any other species, much less be misled by them. Sometimes, too, the habits mentioned by the author as characteristic of a certain species gain unmerited importance from the fact that he omits all mention of them in writing of a closely related species. The Louisiana Water-Thrush, for instance, is described as a "walker," while there is no mention of walking in connection with the Ovenbird. The color of the back of the latter species, moreover, we should hardly describe as "brown." Much information is duplicated in the two lists and it would seem to have been better to have combined them, adding separate nominal lists, if desired, of the few species peculiar to the two regions. The reversal of the order of the species, throwing the list out of harmony with all of the modern standard works, is regrettable.

¹ Guide to the Summer Birds of the Bear Mountain and Harriman Park Sections of the Palisades Interstate Park. By P. M. Silloway, M.S., Investigator in Forest Zoology, N. Y. State College of Forestry at Syracuse University, Bull. No. II, Vol. IX, No. 21, March, 1920, pp. 1-105, numerous text cuts and map.