

but instead of placing it in the Campophagidae he places it in a new family, Sphecotheridae, next to the latter. This family name would appear to be proposed here for the first time although there is nothing in the text to indicate it, the entire text leading one to infer that he is placing the genus in the Campophagidae. For the two genera of Log-runners he proposes the family Orthonycidae but what disposition he intends to make of *Cinclosoma* is not clear. As the text stands it is included with the Log-runners but the page heading over each species reads "Family Cinclosomatidae." Possibly a section of text covering this family was accidentally omitted. It is unfortunate that such an important work should be marred by such slips as these which leave the reader at a loss to know just what the author's views may be.

Papuorthonyx (p. 177) is proposed as a new genus for *Orthonyx novaeguineae*.

The plates and text are fully up to the standard of the work.—W. S.

Van Oort's 'Birds of the Netherlands.'¹—Part 9 of this notable work consists, like its predecessor, entirely of plates. There are ten in all, six of ducks, one of a shearwater—*Puffinus puffinus yelkonan* and three of Marsh Hawks.—*Circus cyaneus* and *pygargus*. The ducks are the Eider, of which there is besides the one of the nuptial plumages, another showing the eclipse dress and the molting condition leading up to it; the White-headed Ruddy Duck, the European Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser and the Smew. The importance of this work to American ornithologists is evident when we realize that almost all of the excellent plates in the present part represent American forms or those very closely related to them and we do not know where a more satisfactory series of illustrations of duck plumages can be found. The text to these parts will follow later.—W. S.

Howell's 'Biological Survey of Alabama.'²—This pamphlet based upon the field work of Mr. Howell and his assistants in practically all parts of the State, contains a detailed report on the mammals and a brief preliminary consideration of the "Physiography and Life Zones" of the State, with a number of photographs and a colored faunal map.

The report on the birds is reserved for a separate publication but lists of the characteristic breeding species of the Upper and Lower Austral Zones, the only two life zones traversing Alabama, are given in the present connection.

Failure to follow the A. O. U. 'Check-List' in this and other publications of the Biological Survey seems unfortunate. Most readers will be con-

¹ Ornithologia Neerlandica. De Vogels van Neerland door Dr. E. D. Van Oort. Af. 9. Martinus Nijhoff. The Hague. 1921.

² A Biological Survey of Alabama. I. Physiography and Life Zones. II. The Mammals. N. A. Fauna, No. 45. U. S. Biological Survey. October 28, 1921. pp. 1-88, pl I-XI.

fused to find *Quiscalus quiscula quiscula* which is the Purple Grackle of the 'Check-List' applied to the Florida Grackle and the Florida Red-wing called *Agelaius phoeniceus phoeniceus*. Some departures from current nomenclature have the 'Check-List' equivalents in the foot notes but by no means all of them, and even then the misleading expression "formerly known as," is used, while as a matter of fact they *are still* the current names so far as any standard exists. If everyone is going to exercise his own preference in the matter of names why should we have a check list or strive for uniformity? It is discouraging to find the Biological Survey, which has done so much to advance American Ornithology, so easily led into this mad rush to be "up to the minute" in nomenclatural technicalities without waiting to see whether the proposals are going to receive general acceptance, and thereby rendering their publications ambiguous to the general reader.

For this, however, Mr. Howell is probably not responsible. He has furnished us with an authoritative and much needed treatise on the distribution of life in a much neglected State, while his report on the mammals is so admirable that we look forward with impatience for the appearance of that on the birds.—W. S.

Holt on the Avery Bird Collection.¹—This little brochure consists of a catalogue of the specimens contained in the collection of birds formed by the late Dr. Wm. Cushman Avery and now in the Alabama Museum of Natural History. To these data Mr. Holt has added excerpts from Dr. Avery's field notes and from publications of his which appeared in the 'American Field' and the 'Ornithologist and Oologist,' the whole forming quite a complete catalogue of the bird life of Greensboro and vicinity where his investigations were carried on. No less than 216 species are listed.

There is a biographical sketch of Dr. Avery by his sister Miss Mary E. Avery and a portrait.—W. S.

Chapin on Congo Birds.²—In studying his Congo collection Mr. Chapin has come upon a number of interesting things which are here placed on record in advance of his main report.

A new species of *Buphagus* is described from Zambi, Lower Congo as *B. langi* (p. 4), and the subgeneric term *Buphagoides* is proposed for *B. erythrorhynchus*. *Nectarinia congoensis* he considers to be restricted to the region above Irebu on the forested banks of the Congo where he rediscovered it. *Neolestes* he regards as a Pycnonotid confirming Gadow's view and considers *Nicator* "as near to the Pycnonotidae as to any member

¹ Annotated List of the Avery Bird Collection in the Alabama Museum of Natural History. By Ernest G. Holt. Museum Paper No. 4. Alabama Mus. Nat. Hist., 1921. pp. 1-142.

² Notes on a New Ox-pecker and other Little-Known Birds of the Congo. By James P. Chapin. Amer. Mus. Novit. No. 17. Sept. 16. 1920. pp. 1-16.