

the warmth. A few of the Waxwings also took advantage of the chance to drink but did not tarry long after quenching their thirst.

The most interesting differences between the two birds were to be noted in their manner of feeding. Hackberries (*Celtis occidentalis*) being the only available food and then only on the tips of the smallest twigs, having been eaten long before within reach of the twigs large enough to serve as perches, it was necessary for the birds to take the food on the wing and the Robins seemed to be at a great disadvantage. With head to the wind the Robins would flutter up until the bill almost touched the berry, meanwhile holding the head motionless, and finally after several attempts securing the berry. The Waxwing would hover about the twig tips with apparent ease, and from one position twist the head and extend the neck reaching several berries. Both the numbing effect of the cold and the unnatural manner of taking food undoubtedly handicapped the Robins. At any rate they had more difficulty in maintaining their position about the twig tips by hovering and poorer use of the head and neck in grasping the berries while on the wing than did the Waxwings. Also when perched in a windy situation the Robins maintained their positions only with many wing-beats and wide spread tail while the Waxwings sat in the face of the wind with closed tail and scarcely a wing-beat.

Last fall's hackberry crop was an unusually heavy one and served as the principal food of the large flocks of Cedar Waxwings which spent the winter with us. Large flocks of Red-headed Woodpeckers (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*) also remained throughout the winter feeding on the berries. Never before in the past four winters spent at Lawrence have I found the Red-headed Woodpecker remaining throughout the winter and I believe that their stay in such large numbers the past winter was due mainly to the abundant food supply. The winter was less severe than usual, too.

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RECENT LITERATURE.

Bent's 'Life Histories of North American Wild Fowl.'¹—The first part of Mr. Bent's 'Life Histories' of the Ducks, Geese, etc., is well up to the standard established in the preceding 'Life Histories' and, as in those volumes, the reader is amazed at the vast amount of material that the author has assembled and the extent of the research required to bring it together.

The species covered in the present volume are the Mergansers and the Ducks from *Anas* to *Marila* inclusive, in the order of the A. O. U. 'Check-List,' which has been followed, even though the nomenclature has not.

¹ Life Histories of North American Wild Fowl. Order Anseres (Part). By Arthur Cleveland Bent, of Taunton, Massachusetts. U. S. Nat. Mus. Bulletin 126. Washington, 1923, pp. i-ix + 1-250, pls. 1-46.

The various Old World forms recently added to the fauna, mainly in the far northwest have been interpolated where they are considered to belong. Curiously enough, although the author emphasizes the close relationship between the Ring-necked Duck and the Tufted Duck, also pointed out by Hollister, he places them in different genera separated by the Scaups! However he is evidently not responsible for this arrangement as he has transferred all authority for the scientific nomenclature of his work to Dr. Charles W. Richmond and Dr. Harry C. Oberholser (introduction p. 6), and his opposition to a multiplicity of genera is well known (see 'Auk', 1923, p. 180). He has, however, a comment on nomenclature on p. 64 when he says of the complicated history of the Black Duck, "Our old friend was hardly recognizable after all the changes; fortunately we can still call him by the old familiar name, the Black Duck. Let us be thankful for the much-needed stability in the English names." To this we would say amen! and trust that those who have been advocating changes in the English names will take heed. Indeed we regret that Mr. Bent did not omit the Latin names entirely, for they seem to serve no purpose whatever in a work of this kind.

The birds of which our author treats in this volume are species which have from the earliest times attracted man's attention and their life histories, so admirably told, will furnish most entertaining reading to numbers of sportsmen and nature lovers to whom the rarer and unfamiliar birds of the sea in the earlier 'Life Histories' had less appeal. These readers will make a large addition to the ornithologists who value all the volumes equally as works of reference, and we hope the edition has been made adequate to meet this need. Let all those who can do so respond to Mr. Bent's appeal for help and send him information on species far along on the list so that he may have adequate data to draw upon when the time comes.—W. S.

Preble and McAtee on the Birds of the Pribilof Islands.¹—This report is based on observations made by the senior author on a visit to the islands in 1914 as a member of the Fur Seal Commission, as well as data and collections obtained by others, notably by W. L. Hahn and G. Dallas Hanna, and the late William Palmer's painstaking report published in 1899 which up to the present time has been "the only completely annotated list of the birds of the group." Mr. Preble is responsible for the general accounts and Mr. McAtee for the data on food, based largely on personal analysis of stomach contents furnished by various collectors. The result is an unusually complete series of data on the various species, covering habits, abundance, migration, nesting and food, and forming a most important work of reference.

¹ North American Fauna, No. 46. A Biological Survey of the Pribilof Islands, Alaska. I. Birds and Mammals. By Edward A. Preble and W. L. McAtee. II. Insects, Arachnids and Chilopods. By various Entomologists with an Introduction by W. L. McAtee. June 20, 1923. Birds, pp. 1-101, pl. 2-6.