

returns reported to the Survey which have to do with 103 species. The great bulk of these are from Ducks, notably the Mallard and Black Duck, but some of those relating to other species are the most interesting, as for instance, a Common Tern banded on the coast of Maine and recovered in South Nigeria, West Africa, and another of the same species banded at Brigantine, N. J. and recovered in Trinidad.

This sort of publication is most important and most practical and this is in our opinion the right way to publish banding records. The long lists of birds banded and the recovery records, scattered through various publications, do little good, as it takes too much time to look them up and correlate them. Published in this way by the Biological Survey all records are brought together in convenient form and can readily be studied and compared.

The large number of banded birds found dead at or near the banding stations demands most careful investigation in connection with the communication under "Correspondence" in the present issue of 'The Auk.' Any real menace to bird life that may be positively proven to result directly or indirectly from banding must be promptly eliminated. The birds are too valuable to be uselessly destroyed and the method of study too important to be abandoned or to have any serious criticism placed upon it.—W. S.

Chapin on the Weaver-Finches of the Genus *Pyrenestes*.—Mr. Chapin's latest contribution to African ornithology¹ is a study of the genus *Pyrenestes*, a group of Weaver-Finches which exhibits a variation in the size of the beak comparable to that of the Galapagos Finches (*Geospiza*). This variation has not been well understood nor has the coloration of the sexes been satisfactorily worked out. Mr. Chapin's paper is a philosophical discussion of the distribution of the species and races and their relationship to one another, to forest areas, rainfall and food. His conclusions are that there are three species clearly distinguished by their coloration: (1) a species with black and red males, ranging from the Gold Coast to Uganda; (2) one with brown and red males, occurring from Senegal to Liberia; and (3) a similar species but with the red not extending to the hind crown. Each of these species is divisible into races varying in size and in proportions of the beak, which variation is roughly correlated with changes in vegetation and rainfall, the greater size of the beak being apparently coincident with a diet of hard coated seeds of the Razor-grass (*Scleria*).

A key to the forms, tables of measurements, with maps and diagnoses, add further to the value of this interesting paper.—W. S.

Riley on Celebes Birds.—This paper,² by Mr. J. H. Riley of the

¹ Size Variation in *Pyrenestes*, a Genus of Weaver-Finches. By James P. Chapin, Bull. American Museum, Nat. Hist. Vol. XLIX, Art. IV, pp. 415-441. September 3, 1924.

² We regret that the National Museum has not yet been able to return to the practise of dating their papers as was the custom prior to the war. A collection of Birds from North and North-central Celebes. By J. H. Riley, Proc. U. S. Nat. Museum. Vol. 64, Art. 16, pp. 1-118. 1924.

U. S. National Museum, is a report on the collections of birds made for the museum by Mr. H. C. Raven, mainly in 1916, while carrying on explorations under the patronage of Dr. W. L. Abbott, who in 1912 was compelled to abandon his personal researches in the far East on account of ill health.

The report covers 202 species and contains lists of specimens with full data, discussions of relationships and plumages and some brief field notes by Mr. Raven. Mr. Riley has from time to time been describing the new forms contained in the collections which number eighteen, two of them, constituting new genera—*Coracornis* and *Celebestia*, while two others belong to genera not hitherto found in Celebes. Two species already known from elsewhere were also added to the Celebesian fauna. The large number of novelties illustrates the thoroughness of Mr. Raven's work, while the care that Mr. Riley has taken with the preparation of the paper makes it one of the most important contributions to the ornithology of the island.

Mr. Riley has also published, recently, a description¹ of a new Babbler from Koh Chang island, Siam, obtained by Dr. Hugh M. Smith while visiting that country. He has named it *Pellorneum smithi* (p. 129).—W. S.

Chapman on New Neotropical Birds.—In two papers, which have appeared since our last issue, Dr. Chapman continues to describe new birds obtained on the various South American expeditions of the American Museum of Natural History.

In the first of these,² eighteen forms are described belonging to the genera: *Tyranniscus*, *Myiozetetes*, *Myiobius*, *Myiochanes*, *Machaeropterus*, *Chloropipo*, *Piprites*, *Manacus*, *Heliochera*, *Neochelidon*, *Petrochelidon*, *Pheugopedius*, *Catharus* and *Cichlopsis*.

His consideration of the genus *Neochelidon* is particularly interesting, as it shows that in spite of the discovery of several new forms of this Swallow no specimen yet obtained can be referred to the true *N. tibialis* of Cassin, the type of which therefore remains unique with its locality still unknown.

Dr. Chapman's second paper³ contains descriptions of twelve new forms of *Pachysylvia*, *Cyclarhis*, *Compsothlypis*, *Basileuterus*, *Catamenia*, *Volatina*, *Sicalis* and *Mimus*. A review of the *Sicalis arvensis* group is also included, and a synopsis of the *Basileuterus tristriatus* group, with the usual full lists of specimens examined and helpful measurements of all allied forms.

The titles of Dr. Chapman's numerous papers dealing with new South American birds are so similar that it will be confusing to refer to them in future and it seems unfortunate that they could not have been numbered

¹ A New Spotted Babbler from Siam. By J. H. Riley. Proc. Biol. Soc. Wash. Vol. 37, pp. 129-130, October 21, 1924.

² Descriptions of New Birds from Ecuador, Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia. By Frank M. Chapman. Amer. Museum Novitates. No. 138. October 18, 1924. pp. 1-16.

³ Descriptions of New Birds from Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia. By Frank M. Chapman. Amer. Museum Novitates. No. 143. November 6, 1924.