

Finally there is the address of Dr. E. W. Nelson<sup>1</sup> before the Outdoor Recreation Conference on the present status of our wild fowl which is likewise not in accord with the statements given in the first publication.

There are and always will be extremists on both sides of all such questions as conservation and game protection whose extravagant statements may be discounted; but when "doctors disagree," and those who at one time worked together are opposed to one another, vast harm is done to the whole policy of conservation, the public becomes disgusted and do not know what to believe and legislative bodies do not know how to vote.

The same difference of opinion among the conservationists seems to have held up the national game refuge bill and doubtless will prevent action by Congress on bag limits or any similar subject. Meanwhile why cannot the extremists realize what harm they are doing and join with other forces in at least getting at the facts in the case. From entirely independent evidence we doubt very much the efficacy of bag limits on the rank and file of unprincipled and irresponsible gunners. Such men can easily get the bag limit again and again without detection.

It seems to be admitted on all sides that there are something like a million unlicensed gunners in the United States and that the unwarranted draining of marsh lands is depriving the Ducks of necessary retreats. Why not then concentrate upon remedying these conditions rather than publishing broadcast opposing views on bag limits. The U. S. Department of Agriculture has accomplished a great deal for conservation and the public we feel has not yet lost confidence in its officers.—W. S.

**Recent Papers by Domaniewski.**—M. Janusz Domaniewski has recently published a review of the Woodpeckers of the genus *Picumnus*<sup>2</sup> in which he recognizes no less than 52 species and subspecies. *P. irenae* (p. 292) from central Peru, *P. jelskii vitocensis* (p. 233) central Peru, *P. buffoni meridionalis* (p. 296) for *P. b. amazonicus* Snethl. preoccupied, and *P. punctifrons taczanowskii* (p. 297) n. e. Peru are proposed as new. A full bibliography of 151 titles and a plate complete the paper.

In another paper<sup>3</sup> he lists the Polish Anatidae and presents a key to the thirty-seven species with notes on three others of probable occurrence.—W. S.

**Clark on Animal Voices.**—This paper<sup>4</sup> is an interesting popular presentation of a subject to which Dr. Clark has given much attention

<sup>1</sup> Our Migratory Wild Fowl and Present Conditions Affecting their Abundance. By E. W. Nelson. Washington, D. C., March, 1926. (Mimeographed) p. 1-17.

<sup>2</sup> Uebersicht der Formen der Gattung *Picumnus* Temm. By J. Domaniewski. Annal. Zoöl. Mus. Polon. Hist. Nat. IV, 4, December 1, 1925, pp. 287-308 with one plate.

<sup>3</sup> Uebersicht einheimischer Formen der Familie Anatidae. By J. Domaniewski. Osobne odbicie z T. LX. Spraw. Kom. fizjogr. Polskiej Akademji Umiej. 1925, pp. 113-127

<sup>4</sup> Animal Voices. By Austin H. Clark Scientific Monthly January, 1926, pp. 40-48

and to which he brings his wide and varied knowledge of the animal kingdom. Briefly he regards sustained monotonous sounds ("keep away" sounds he terms them) as repellent, as the roar of the surf, the rattle of rattlesnakes and the buzzing of bees. Then there are the alarm cries so frequent in birds ("come to me" cries) in protecting their nests and young. These he regards as protective in as much as they at once attract the attention of other enemies which may be also enemies of the attacking creature, which will flee for safety upon their approach and give the victim a chance of escape. The repeated chirps of small active birds ("here I am" cries) are also protective as they call attention to the spot where the bird was when the cry was given but which it immediately left, thus continually confusing the pursuer, while the complicated songs of birds are claimed to have a similar bewildering effect upon their most frequent enemies, the Hawks, which habitually travel rapidly and do not therefore get the songs clearly and definitely located. Other confusing calls are the nocturnal utterances of Whip-poor-wills and similar species and these give rise to counter confusing cries of their enemies ("I'm after you" calls) which from their indefinite location in the dark bewilder their prey and throw them off their guard. It is inconceivable in our author's opinion that bird song is not part of the delicate protective adjustment that we recognize in nature in form, structure and color.

Minor functions of animal sounds Dr. Clark considers are to act as a sex stimulus and to keep migrant flocks and families together.

There is much food for thought in this paper and it will be read with interest by those who enjoy speculations as to the meaning of color, voice, etc., and doubtless the slight weight that he gives to bird song in connection with mating activities will be met by strenuous objection.

There is one paragraph that we think warrants serious consideration, not only in discussions of animal behaviour and development, but also in matters of conservation, where many of our policies are one-sided and may inadvertently aid in the very destruction against which we think that we are guarding, i.e.: "Every creature in the world is so beset with enemies that it leads the most precarious sort of an existence. Any false step means death. Any transgression of the rigid limitations within which life for it is possible, whether by individual variation in form or structure, or by unfortunate accident, means the prompt elimination of the individual so transgressing." How many individuals or species do we destroy or threaten with destruction by forcing upon them just such transgressions?—W. S.

**McLellan on 'Birds and Mammals of the Revillagigedo Islands.'**—

This report<sup>1</sup> covers an expedition of the Californian Academy of Sciences

<sup>1</sup> Expedition to the Revillagigedo Islands, Mexico, in 1925, VI. The Birds and Mammals. By M. E. McLellan, Assistant Curator, Department of Ornithology and Mammalogy, Proc. California Acad. Sciences, Fourth Series, Vol. XV, No. 11, pp. 279-322, May, 1926.