

Vasa Parrots recently received at the Museum of Comparative Zoology show that there are two forms of this bird, the black typical form occurring in the eastern part of the island while a gray form inhabits the western part. This is described as *Coracopsis nigra libs* (p. 83) Miandrivazo, Madagascar.—W. S.

**Bangs and Peters on Birds of the Rain Forest of Vera Cruz.**—The annotated list<sup>1</sup> here presented covers the collection made by W. W. Brown at Motzorongo and Presidio, Vera Cruz. He was sent out by Col. John E. Thayer especially to search for the great ornithological rarity, *Hylorchilus sumichrasti* (Lawrence), a species of Wren hitherto known from only three specimens. That his search was successful may be gathered from the fact that he secured no less than thirty-eight specimens together with the nest and eggs. Col. Thayer has presented all of the collection except the North American migrants to the Museum of Comparative Zoology. The new forms described in the paper by Messrs. Bangs and Peters are: *Crypturornis cinnamomeus praepe*s (p. 472) Costa Rica, *Synallaxis erythrothorax furtiva* (p. 476) Vera Cruz, and *Henicorhina prosthaleuca tropaea* (p. 480) Costa Rica. There are important comments on the relationship of the races of *Scardafella inca*, *Stelgidopteryx ruficollis* and *Pachystylia decurtata*.—W. S.

**Report on the Ruffed Grouse Investigation.**—Drs. A. A. Allen and A. O. Gross present a preliminary report<sup>2</sup> on investigations on the diseases of the Ruffed Grouse which they have been carrying on. Results so far seem to show that there is a great scarcity of Grouse at scattered points in Canada and the northern States. In spite of the prevalent idea that there is one disease responsible for the decrease in the birds, investigation shows that there are over twenty parasites or diseases any one of which may become important in a definite locality.

The symptoms and character of these affections are described and a call is made for additional material. Whole birds are better than viscera and many State Game Commissions have authorized their wardens to obtain material for the investigators or to allow hunters to secure it without counting it against their bag limit. Communications should be addressed to the Grouse Investigation Committee, 233 Broadway, N. Y., and details as to shipping will be forwarded. This is a very important piece of work and deserves the support of all sportsmen if this valuable game bird is to be saved.—W. S.

**McAtee on the Role of Vertebrates in Insect Control.**—In this interesting summary<sup>3</sup> the author cites numerous instances where a con-

<sup>1</sup> Birds from the Rain Forest Region of Vera Cruz. By Outram Bangs and James L. Peters. Bull. Mus. Comp. Zool., Vol. LXVII, No. 15, January, 1927. pp. 471-487.

<sup>2</sup> Reprint from 'American Game' Bulletin of the American Game Protective Association, October, 1926.

<sup>3</sup> The Smithsonian Report for 1925.

spicuous outbreak of some insect pest was at once met by the activity of birds which naturally take advantage of a sudden abundance of satisfactory food. In 109 cases the birds soon had the insect outbreak under control and in 88 cases local suppression of the insect was accomplished. The reviewer has noted several cases similar to those cited. At Solon Springs, Wis., in June, 1926, there was a great swarming of Mayflies that attracted birds of several species which simply gorged themselves for a few days destroying a large proportion of the flies. Then when the flight was over they disappeared. Again at Cape May, N. J., in August, 1925, an attack of the Catalpa caterpillar threatened to defoliate these trees but the sudden appearance of Black-billed Cuckoos practically exterminated them in a few days.

The importance of the *presence* of a "bird army" ready to cope with any sudden insect emergency is well emphasized in such cases, and should be borne in mind when destruction of bird haunts is imminent. As particularly apropos of the present time, when thoughtless and ignorant persons are advocating the extermination of the Crow, Mr. McAtee cites a number of instances of Crows practically exterminating white grubs, following the farmer's plow and picking up 90 per cent of all that it turned up.—W. S.

**Bird Protection and Conservation Notes.**—The Illinois Audubon Society has issued another of its 'Audubon Bulletins,' No. 17. It contains among other items an account, of the proof by bird banding data that the Mourning Dove is a migratory bird thus securing for it the protection of the Migratory Bird Treaty. The Ridgway Memorial Fund is discussed with illustrations of Larchmound. There are other beautiful illustrations and the publication lives up to the high standard of its predecessors.

The Australian Museum, College St., Sydney, N. S. W. is issuing a series of educational postal cards each depicting a species of Australian bird in colors, the artist's work being very well done. Six sets of five cards each are available at one shilling per set with an explanatory leaflet.

Hans Freiherr von Berlepsch has issued a pamphlet covering his 18th year of bird study and bird protection.

Archibald Rutledge has a timely warning to farmers to leave some uncleared brush land as shelter for the birds since they will leave a farm that is too clean and the farmer then loses their valuable services. The paper appeared in the 'Saturday Evening Post' for July 31, 1926, and has been reprinted in 'California Fish and Game' for October.

In the latter journal H. C. Bryant discusses the destruction of Western Mourning Doves in California where Dove hunting is still legal.—W. S.

**The Food of Some British Wild Birds.**<sup>1</sup>—Dr. Walter E. Collinge has in this revision of his 1913 book of the same title completed a monumental

<sup>1</sup> Published by the Author, The Museum, York, England, in 9 parts, 1924-1927, Price 50 shillings.