

Mrs. Sturgis's 'Field Book of Birds of the Canal Zone.'—The most recent of Putnam's 'Nature Field Books' is an attractive little volume by Mrs. Bertha Bement Sturgis entitled 'Field Book of Birds of the Panama Canal Zone.' As Dr. Chapman explains in the "foreword": "There has long been a demand for a popular book on the birds of the Canal Zone and Mrs. Sturgis, after three years' residence in the Zone, experienced this want and, returning to the United States where material for study was available, she filled it with the present volume."

The facilities of the American Museum of Natural History were made available to the author and with specimens and the published literature at her disposal the present excellent little book has been prepared.

There is an introduction which discusses the extinction of birds in the Zone, the need of sanctuaries, etc. Then a short account of the commonest birds of the region and a brief explanation of the nature of scientific names and the principles of classification. The main text consists of descriptions of the species and usually a short paragraph on habitat and habits. When the technical name adopted differs from that used in Stone's 'Birds of the Panama Canal Zone' (Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phila., 1918, pp. 239-280) or Ridgway's 'Birds of North and Middle America', references to these works are given. Under the family headings some of the general characteristics and habits of the group are presented. There is an explanatory list of localities mentioned in the text and a nominal list of migrants and winter visitants from the United States—eighty-nine in number. If we have counted correctly there are 418 species or subspecies included in Mrs. Sturgis's book as against 432 listed by Stone, some of which were based on dubious authority, and we can take the first figure as indicating pretty accurately the extent of the avifauna of the Zone. The largest groups are the Tyrannidae with 52 species, the Formicariidae with 21, Hawks, etc. 23, Hummingbirds 20, and Tanagers 19. Keys are furnished for most of the families which aid the student materially in identifying his birds.

The illustrations comprise eight plates by F. L. Jaques, six of which are in colors and sixteen additional plates from photographs of birds from life or of scenery, as well as 107 line drawings of heads or entire birds, some of them rather crude, by Rudyerd Boulton. The printing of the book and its general make-up are excellent.

This is probably the first hand-book, at least in English, of the birds of any part of the Neotropical region and is particularly welcome at this time when so many persons are visiting the Zone and quite a number

¹ Field Book of Birds of the Panama Canal Zone. A Description of the Habits, Call Notes and Songs of the Birds of the Panama Canal Zone, for the Purpose of Identifying Them. Many of These Birds are Also Common in Central and South America. By Bertha Bement Sturgis. With over 100 illustrations, color plates, pen and ink sketches, and a map of the Panama Canal Zone. G. P. Putnam's Sons New York and London, The Knickerbocker Press. 1928. pp. i-xxxix + 1-466, pll. 1-4. figg. 1-107. Price \$3.50.

studying at the Barro Colorado Zoological Station. Mrs. Sturgis is to be congratulated upon an excellent piece of work.—W. S.

Van Schaick's 'Nature Cruisings.'—The editor of the 'Christian Leader,' John Van Schaick Jr., has written many articles for his paper dealing with the great outdoors and the best of these have been gathered together in the present volume.¹ Those who enjoy reading nature books will find both pleasure and profit in Mr. van Schaick's book. He has the gift of putting his observations in a way that constantly holds one's interest and his descriptions bring vividly before our mind's eye the scenes that he describes.

There is much about his old home town of Cobleskill, N. Y., a series of chapters dealing with the environs of Boston, and another on Washington and the Potomac, while other sketches treat of "cruises" farther afield.

Trees, plants and birds all appeal to the author as well as the beauty of nature in general, while his constant reference to and quotations from the writings of a long list of authors bear evidence of his wide reading of nature lore. There are interesting accounts of associations with the Audubon Societies of Massachusetts and the District of Columbia and he acknowledges his indebtedness to the secretary of the A. O. U. for starting him on his "life list" although on account of an unfortunate typographical error that gentleman's identity is concealed under the name of "G" S. Palmer.

Many members of the Union will find familiar trails in Mr. van Schaick's delightful volume and all nature lovers will enjoy it.—W. S.

Hausman's 'Hawks of New Jersey.'—At the present time when the tide of public opinion guided by sportsman interests is setting against the Hawks with the danger of their utter extermination, a book² like that which Dr. Hausman has published is most welcome. It calls attention vigorously to the beneficial character of most Hawks and their especial value to the farmer.

In his foreword the author sums up the situation aptly with the following statement: "If one should see a man in a blue suit making his escape after robbing a house, and should thereupon sally forth into the street with a shot gun and blaze away at every man in a blue suit that he happened to meet he would be carrying out in practice the principle upon which many act when they wage indiscriminate warfare upon our native hawks." He then proceeds to set forth the characteristics, habits and value of the thirteen Hawks and the Turkey Vulture found in New

¹ *Nature Cruisings to the Old Home Town and the Little Hill Farm.* By John van Schaick, Jr. Editor of the *Christian Leader*. Author of *The Little Corner Conquered, Cruising Around a Changing World, Cruising Cross Country.* The Murray Press, Boston, Mass. 1928. pp. 1-448.

² *The Hawks of New Jersey and their Relation to Agriculture.* Dr. Leon Augustus Hausman. New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, New Brunswick, N. J., Bulletin 439. January, 1927. pp. 1-48, figg. 1-48.