

they deal and mentioning the small amount of material at the disposal of the early systematists, the author remarks that it is surprising that they made so few errors. It would seem to us that while a study such as is here presented has a value all its own, that such an amount of study is not actually necessary for systematic work. The systematist soon recognizes what sort of characters are likely to prove of value in separating species or subspecies and that is why he makes comparatively few errors even with a very small amount of material.

Mr. Linsdale has certainly presented a vast amount of data which is available for various lines of investigation and other interesting deductions may doubtless be made from it besides those that he has formulated. One point of interest to the systematist is his conclusion that there are no characters of any sort by which the genera *Passerella* and *Melospiza* may be definitely separated, a fact that has apparently been suspected by others but no one has ventured to combine the two groups with their long array of subspecies. However since Dr. Wetmore and Mr. Miller have allowed them to stand in their outline of classification for the new A. O. U. 'Check-List' there may be some differential characters that Mr. Linsdale has failed to grasp, possibly obscured by the excessive plasticity of both genera, or is it simply a matter of personal opinion such as confronts us in the recognition of various other genera and species?

There are a number of excellent photographic plates of skulls of Fox Sparrows and many charts showing variations.—W. S.

**Mathews' 'Birds of Norfolk and Lord Howe Islands.'**—This volume<sup>1</sup> as distinctly stated by the author is not a supplement to his 'Birds of Australia' although a useful addition to that work. As a matter of fact it is exactly uniform with the other work and the second part consists of "Birds of the South Polar Quadrant and Additions to 'The Birds of Australia'."

There are 39 species and subspecies recorded from the two islands all but five of which are figured on the 29 plates which are mainly colored, and from drawings by Grönvold.

The second part of the volume consists of sixteen plates, all in colors illustrating the six additional species of the South Polar region and a number of additional forms for Australia with notes on several others. So far as we can see there are no new forms described in this work. Mr. Mathews considers that the regions here covered belong naturally and faunally to Australia and suggests that in any new list their birds be added to the Australian avifauna. The text and plates are fully up to the standard set in 'The Birds of Australia' and the work is most welcome,

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<sup>1</sup> The Birds of Norfolk & Lord Howe Islands and the Australian South Polar Quadrant with Additions to "The Birds of Australia." By Gregory M. Mathews, author of "The Birds of Australia" with Hand-colored and Monochrome Plates. H. F. and G. Witherby, 326 High Holborn, London. 1928. pp. i-xii + 1-139, pll. 1-45 (unnumbered). Published October 16, 1928.

summarizing as it does the avifauna of an out of the way corner of the world with which no one is more familiar than Mr. Mathews.—W. S.

**Swann's 'Monograph of the Birds of Prey.'**—This notable publication<sup>1</sup> which has been suspended since the death of its author is now resumed under the editorship of Dr. Alexander Wetmore. No change is to be made in regard to the distinctness of the various forms and their relationship to one another and Mr. Swann's manuscript was fortunately left in such shape that no major alterations will be necessary. The present installment completes the genera *Buteo* and *Triorchis* while the illustrations consist of colored plates of species of *Aquila* and *Ictinaetus*, eggs of Eagles as well as plain plates from photographs by George H. Stuart 3rd, of Philadelphia, of the nest and nest site of the Ferruginous Rough-leg in Saskatchewan.

We notice that the name *Buteo platypterus cubanensis* Burns (Wilson Bull. XXIII, No. 76-77, p. 148) has been omitted. It is in all probability a synonym of *platypterus* as considered by Barbour.

It is very gratifying to know that this important work is to be brought to completion, and a better selection of an editor could not have been made.—W. S.

**Havre's 'Birds of Belgium'**.<sup>2</sup>—This work is a thoroughly up-to-date list of the birds of Belgium with details of their distribution. It includes 366 species and subspecies and seems to be very carefully compiled and exhaustive.

Under each species is given the more important synonyms and references, followed by detailed consideration of distribution under three heads—General, Belgium, and Neighboring Countries. There are keys to the species in each genus and many text figures of feet, wings and heads, which aid in identification; also a map and an excellent bibliography of local notes and papers relating to Belgian birds.

M. Havre's work will long stand as the authoritative book on the birds of Belgium.—W. S.

**Bangs and Peters on Chinese Birds.**<sup>3</sup>—Dr. Joseph F. Rock, during 1925 and 1926, visited western China in the interests of the Arnold Arboretum to secure botanical and horticultural material. Through the gen-

<sup>1</sup> Monograph of the Birds of Prey (Order Accipitres). By H. Kirke Swann and Alexander Wetmore. London: Wheldon and Wesley Ltd., 2, 3 & 4 Arthur St., New Oxford St., W. C. 2. Part VII, Sept. 1928, pp. 397-428, five plates. Price 26 shillings net.

<sup>2</sup> Les Oiseaux de la Faune Belge Relevé documenté des espèces sauvages observées en Belgique. Par le Chevalier G. C. M. van Havre, Membre du Comité Ornithologique International et Permanent et du Conseil Supérieur de la Chasse. Bruxelles, Maurice Lamertin, Editeur, 56-60 Rue Coudenberg. 1928. pp. 1-497. Price 150 francs.

<sup>3</sup> Birds Collected by Dr. Joseph F. Rock in Western Kansu and Eastern Tibet, Bull. Mus. Comp. Zool. LXVIII, No. 7, pp. 313-381, pls. 1-5. August, 1928