

RECENT LITERATURE

Arrigoni Degli Oddi's 'Italian Ornithology.'—Italy has been generally charged with a lack of interest in bird study and bird protection, and pointed out as a country where song birds were regarded mainly as food and where bird netting and bird killing at any season were legitimate occupations. In 1923 however a national game law was passed and in 1926 an important report on bird protection appeared under the authorship of Count E. Arrigoni Degli Oddi and serious effort has since been made to create a proper regard for wild bird conservation.

And now appears an exhaustive treatise¹ by the same author, the leading Italian ornithologist, on the birds of Italy, which will go far toward developing interest in the bird life of the country. This notable work of over 1200 pages measures fully up to its title, 'Ornitologia Italiana,' and is as up to date and comprehensive an "Ornithology" as exists for any of the other European countries.

The main text treats of no less than 518 species and subspecies which have been recorded within the limits of Italy. The latest scientific nomenclature is used and vernacular names in Italian, French, German and English are provided for each species, while for the more familiar birds a large number of local names is added. There is a detailed description of each species, an outline of its breeding area, comparisons with related forms, and paragraphs on habitat, song, nidification and food. There are also diagnoses of genera and families with some general information about the birds composing them.

An excellent bibliography of nearly 1000 titles covering articles and books on Italian ornithology is appended, as well as general accounts of the structure of birds, migration, song, eggs, nidification and taxonomy. There is also a list of species erroneously attributed to Italy, a systematic list of the birds of Italy, a table of migration dates, etc.

Upwards of 500 text figures illustrate heads, feet and other details while 36 colored plates depict most of the Italian species. While the latter will serve for purposes of identification they are unfortunately rather crude in execution and evidently Italy has yet to produce a Fuertes or a Thorburn.

The author is to be congratulated upon producing one of the most notable of recent "ornithologies" which will serve as a work of reference to bird students throughout the world and should have a profound influence in developing a broader interest in bird study in Italy.—W. S.

¹ Dott. Ettore Arrigoni Degli Oddi. Ornitologia Italiana, con 586 figure intercalate nel testo e 36 tavole colorate

"I slept and dreamed the life was beauty
I woke and see the life is duty."

Ulrico Hoepli editore libraio della real casa. Milano. 1929. pp. i-cl+1-1046, pll. I-XXXVI. Price L. 180.