

Todd on Pachysylvia.—Mr. Todd has undertaken a monographic study¹ of the birds of this genus based primarily upon the splendid series of six hundred skins in the collection of the Carnegie Museum. He recognizes no less than thirty-five forms referred to twenty-three species. The fact that only three new forms are described shows how carefully the group has been studied by previous authors. The new forms are: *P. semicinerea viridiceps* (p. 191) French Guiana; *P. ochraceiceps viridior* (p. 194) Rio Surutu, Bolivia; and *P. o. nelsoni* (p. 195) new name for *P. o. brevipennis* Nelson.

The descriptions are full, with helpful remarks and comparisons, and there is a useful key to the forms.—W. S.

Burt on the Pterylography of Woodpeckers.—This paper² is a detailed study of the feather arrangement in twenty-three species and subspecies of North American Woodpeckers with many text cuts. The results show that the pterylography of these forms is remarkably similar. There are abundant characters diagnostic of a family nature but with the single exception of *Sphyrapicus* none of generic value while specific differences are slight and somewhat variable.

Mr. Burt has made a valuable contribution to an important field in which but few Americans are working. We trust that he will continue this line of research to other groups.—W. S.

Miss Howard on the Avifauna of a Shell Mound.—One of the large Indian shell mounds on the shores of San Francisco Bay, having been condemned in order to make way for a factory, was leveled through the agency of a steam shovel. The University of California took advantage of the opportunity to collect and preserve all artifacts, human and other bones, etc., contained in the mound, and the present report³ is based upon some 6700 bird bones of which 4155 were identifiable. Fifty species have been identified although no attempt was made to differentiate the Anatidae and Laridae which have been listed as one species each. There were thirty-three water birds, fourteen raptorial, one gallinaceous and two passerine. Four species present in the mound are not now found in the immediate vicinity and one, *Grus mexicana*, has never been recorded from the Bay region. On the other hand twenty species now present are not represented in the mound fauna. The presence of nestling Cormorants points to the existence of Cormorant rookeries on islands within the bay. The bones are usually in a much broken condition indicating perhaps attempts to use them in making whistles or other objects.

¹ A Review of the Vireonine Genus *Pachysylvia*. By W. E. Clyde Todd. Proc. Biol. Soc. Washington, Vol. 42, pp. 181-206, July 16, 1929.

² Pterylography of Certain North American Woodpeckers. By William Henry Burt. Univ. Calif. Publ. in Zoology. Vol. 30, No. 15, pp. 427-442. June 18, 1929.

³ The Avifauna of Emeryville Shellmound. By Hildegard Howard. Univ. Calif. Publ. in Zool. Vol. 32, No. 2, pp. 301-394. July 19, 1929.

There are no Pleistocene species although a few bones show some slight petrification.

The collection is fully discussed and many tables of measurements given along with a number of drawings of the bones.

Miss Howard has entered a rather novel field and has produced a paper of much interest both ornithologically and anthropologically.—W. S.

Prof. Patten's 'The Story of the Birds.'—This volume¹ of some 500 pages consists of nineteen radio lectures given by the author, who is professor of anatomy in Sheffield University, to the school children of England. These have been elaborated to some extent and an abundance of excellent illustrations has been added. While the subtitle includes the "habits" of birds we find that that part of the text not concerned with bird structure is entirely devoted to bird song and migration, and the grouping of birds with regard to the time of occurrence, with little or nothing regarding nests and eggs or food habits, which we might expect in a work of this scope.

While the work deals, as is to be expected, with British birds, nevertheless the chapters on the anatomy, structure of feathers, etc., apply equally well to the birds of all countries and present in an easily understood manner a great amount of information. The portion devoted to migration, while presenting the general problem in an attractive manner, still adheres to the love of home as the inducement to spring migration and the failure of food as the incentive in the autumn. As the book has been written essentially for, and addressed to, young people the author has endeavored to impart a considerable amount of "light and shade" to his exposition and so we find some chapters written in an extremely popular vein and in conversational form while others smack of the technical college lecture.

A good word is said for birds in general and their economic importance while "Birds of Prey" says Prof. Patten "lay claim to far more consideration than is usually meted out to them. Like other predatory animals, they are, in truth *'the salt of the earth.'* Their wholesale destruction by game keepers and farmers has more than once recoiled upon the heads of the destroyers." American Game Commissions should take heed to this and guard against the whirlwind that they seem bent on preparing for future generations to harvest.

Prof. Patten's book should prove of wide interest, presenting in a more or less popular way a vast amount of information not usually included in popular ornithologies.—W. S.

Wetmore on New Birds from Haiti.—Continued study of the birds of the island of Haiti discloses the presence of two additional distinguish-

¹ *The Story of the Birds. A Guide to the Study of Avian Structure and Habits. Founded on a Series of Broadcast Addresses Delivered to the Schools in Sheffield. By Charles J. Patten, M.A., M.D., Sc.D., Professor of Anatomy, Sheffield University. Pawson & Brallsford, Sheffield 1928. pp. i-xxvii+1-478, 82 text figures and 29 plates.*