

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON BIRD PROTECTION.

BY H. C. BRYANT, CHAIRMAN.

Soon after its appointment in February, the Committee on Bird Protection organized and the chairman requested from each member suggestions as to a program of work for the coming year. The major projects submitted by various members of the Committee indicated that there are many problems needing immediate attention. Those suggested were as follows:

1. Education in the schools.
2. Reduction in the destructiveness of lighthouses.
3. Abatement of oil danger to birds.
4. Protection of birds of prey, and discouragement of anti-vermin campaigns.
5. Establishment of bird sanctuaries.
6. Special consideration of vanishing species.
7. The organization in each State of a Commission supported by a vacationist license.
8. Support of moves for the establishment of true wilderness areas.

With these projects in mind, it was planned to draft a bird protection platform but, before this was accomplished, the attention of the Committee was diverted to two worthy objects—the Eagle Bill then before Congress, and to matters pertaining to the establishment of a Senate Special Committee on Wild Life Resources. After taking a favorable poll of the Committee, letters were addressed to the Congressmen in charge of the Eagle Bill stating that the Bird Protection Committee had endorsed Senate Bill 2908 and House Bill 7794. The question as to the legal propriety of espousing a cause without due sanction of the Union came up in this regard. It was felt, however, that no current project could be aided effectively if sanction were delayed until an annual meeting. If Committee members are chosen because of their talents and interest, sufficient confidence should be imposed in their judgment to allow participation in a timely undertaking within their field of endeavor. If this viewpoint is not in accord with general

policy your Committee will be pleased to submit to any ruling made.

Correspondence with the Secretary of the Senate Special Committee on Wild Life Resources resulted in the furnishing of a list of projects recommended by the Bird Protection Committee of the American Ornithologists' Union as worthy of investigation by the Senate Special Committee. These suggestions were as follows:

1. Danger of replacing native species with foreign ones.
2. Destruction of natural breeding grounds.
3. Protection of American migratory birds by treaties similar to that with Great Britain.
4. Control of alkali poisoning of waterfowl and similar diseases.
5. Oil pollution and its effect on bird life.
6. Dangers of the bounty system and commercial campaigns of destruction as evidenced in the widespread campaign against birds of prey.
7. Need of general public education regarding the economic and aesthetic values pertaining to birds.

An offer was also made the Senate Special Committee of scientific data which might be supplied by various members of the American Ornithologists' Union.

At the last annual meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union resolutions were passed relative to bird losses at the Ontario Long Point light. Believing that Canadian departments concerned would deal adequately with the problem, nothing further has been done.

On May 14, three members of the Bird Protection Committee held an informal meeting in Washington, D. C., at which time a number of matters were discussed, among them scientific collectors' permits and the need for stress on education.

On arrival of the chairman in Washington another meeting was held on October 10 and a bird protection platform was drafted. The admission of a project was determined largely on the basis of whether or not it was in line with these main objects of the Union: sound scientific investigation and the spread of ornithological knowledge, and whether it was of national scope. Furthermore, it was thought best to choose a few major undertakings rather than diffuse effort on many of lesser importance. The platform follows:

PLATFORM OF THE COMMITTEE ON BIRD PROTECTION.¹

1. We reaffirm belief that the most lasting and useful aid to bird protection lies in the education of all to a knowledge of birds, their interrelations, and fundamentally, their value to human kind. We pledge support to all moves to include bird study in the school curriculum and to disseminate dependable information on birds helpful in increasing the knowledge of the general public thereon, including those persons to whom hunting licenses are issued.

2. In that certain native birds have been exterminated and others are fast nearing extinction, we believe effort should be directed toward better protection for these disappearing species. The making of a white list is, for manifest reasons, inexpedient. Every ornithologist, however, knows what species should properly be placed on such a list, and the Committee calls upon members of the Union who are in any way concerned to accord to such birds the fullest measure of protection.

3. Believing that the birds of prey on the whole constitute a benefit to human interests rather than a menace, and believing that it is biologically unsound to remove from our avifauna its class of birds of prey, we oppose all bounties and organized campaigns of destruction directed against any member of this group.

4. On the ground that there is increasing danger to our native bird fauna as a result of the introduction of exotic species which compete to the disadvantage of native kinds, we oppose all individual or sporadic and unstudied attempts at acclimatization of exotic species of birds.

5. Modern man-made developments are bringing about wholesale destruction of birds in increasing numbers of ways, as exemplified in drainage, lighthouses, airport beacons, discharge of oil on waters of streams, lakes, harbors and oceans, poison campaigns, and stray cats. We stand for the reduction of these dangers to the minimum.

6. We shall support legislation, either state, national, or by treaty, favoring real bird protection. Inasmuch as success in all efforts toward bird protection is dependent upon a showing of fact,

¹ Unanimously approved by the Committee: H. C. Bryant, *Chairman*, A. C. Bent, Florence Merriam Bailey, Bayard H. Christy, Stanley G. Jewett, Hoyes Lloyd, Edward A. Preble.

we shall continue to encourage and, in so far as practicable, support sound scientific research and the provision of proper facilities therefor.

The Committee is agreed that the above are the more important policies based on timely projects which should receive the immediate attention of the Bird Protection Committee, and respectfully asks formal approval of the American Ornithologists' Union.