

NOTES AND NEWS.

DR. A. K. FISHER retired from the Bureau of Biological Survey, U. S. Dept. of Agriculture on August 31, 1931, after a service of more than 46 years. He assisted Dr. C. Hart Merriam in 1885 in organizing the section of Economic Ornithology which later became the Biological Survey and has taken an active part in the operations of the Bureau ever since, carrying on investigations, in bird migration, geographic distribution of birds and mammals, and economic relations of Hawks and Owls, while in 1915, he was placed in charge of the predatory animal control. Dr. Fisher was always deeply interested in game protection and was one of the early advocates of stopping spring shooting while he was a member of the committee which prepared the original regulations under the Federal Migratory Bird Law.

He is a Founder and past president of the American Ornithologists' Union and member of many other scientific societies. He was a member of the Death Valley Expedition, the Harriman Alaska Expedition and the Pinchot Expedition to the South Pacific.

His hosts of friends in all parts of the country especially those who have enjoyed his hospitality at the Biologists' Field Club on the Potomac will join in congratulating him, on his splendid service to natural history and wish him all enjoyment that the relief from official work will bring. Dr. Fisher, we understand, now becomes a zoological collaborator of the U. S. National Museum.

MR. OTTO WIDMANN, celebrated his ninetieth birthday on June 15, 1931, being the first American ornithologist to reach that advanced age. The members of the St. Louis Bird Club paid him personal tribute in commemoration of the event and letters, telegrams and flowers poured in from his friends in all parts of the country.

THE ACADEMY OF NATURAL SCIENCES of Philadelphia has had a number of ornithologists in the field during the past year. M. A. Carriker has just returned from a second collecting trip to Peru, W. W. Bowen from a summer's work in Trinidad with Mr. Radcliffe Roberts, while Wharton Huber, who spent the summer with Mr. Henry Drinker, 3rd., in the mountains of New Mexico, has returned with some interesting material. James A. G. Rehn is still in Matto Grosso, Brazil, with the Johnson Expedition collecting zoological material of various kinds.

THE ANNUAL MEETING of the St. Louis Bird Club was held on March 12, 1931 and the following officers were elected for the ensuing year: Dr. L. H. Behrens, President, J. Lawrence Hawk and Prof. L. M. Dougan, Vice-Presidents, and Mrs. George F. Tittmann, Secretary-Treasurer.

DR. C. HART MERRIAM, founder and former Secretary and President of the American Ornithologists' Union, was awarded the Roosevelt Medal on June 23, 1931, in recognition of his distinguished service in the advancement of the study of natural history. He was one of the three to receive the honor this year, the others being Benjamin N. Cardozo, for development of the Law, and Hamlin Garland, novelist and historian.

IN THE July 'Auk' the shortening of the duck season by fifteen days was announced. Since that time the results of the prolonged drought have been seen to be even more serious than at first supposed and a further shortening of the season was declared probable in an announcement of the Biological Survey on July 29. This was followed by a presidential proclamation on August 25 establishing a season of one month as suggested by the Survey, which provided an open season of October 1-31 for New York (exclusive of Long Island), Pennsylvania and all states to the north, also for those north of the Ohio River, Missouri and Kansas and northward. South of this area the season was to be November 16-December 15, as in California, except Florida which was November 20-December 19.

Then in response to the claims of unfairness to sportsmen in part of the northern division, changes were made September 12 as follows: Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island and Illinois, November 1-30; Ohio and Indiana, October 16-November 15; Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska, Kansas, and Oklahoma, October 20-November 19; and Nevada, Oregon and Washington November 16-December 15. No change was made in the southern division.

While most sportsmens' and conservation organizations have approved of this wise movement of the Biological Survey, the 'More Game Birds in America Foundation' has protested vigorously, on the grounds of loss in employment and to dealers in sportsmen's goods and has suggested as an alternative a limit of three days a week without change in season, while the National Association of Audubon Societies calls for a moratorium of a year on all duck shooting. So do opinions on conservation differ! However we feel that the plan adopted by the Biology Survey in this matter is the wisest one and we trust that every sportsman will do his best to live up to the law and encourage others to do so.

AT THE last annual meeting of the National Association of Audubon Societies, held in New York, Oct. 28, 1930, a committee consisting of: Dr. Thomas Barbour, Director of the Museum of Comparative Zoology, and Chauncey Hamlin, President of the Buffalo Museum of Science, was appointed at the request of President Pearson to investigate certain charges made against the Association. Under date of Aug. 19, 1931, the committee has made a comprehensive report of twelve closely printed pages, discussing in detail each of the principal charges, viz: the matter of the "Gunmaker's Money" of 1911, the McIlhenny Duck Shooting Club Project of 1923, and the failure of the Association to support the

recent efforts to bring about a reduction in bag limits on migratory game.

In conclusion the committee reports: "We believe that the Association has served a most creditable purpose. We believe that it has accomplished great ends—and that the funds entrusted to it have been well expended. . . . After a full investigation we feel that the Society may be proud of a great record and that such trifling missteps as have possibly been made from time to time are due to the inevitable frailties of mere men."

THE ANNUAL MEETING of the American Ornithologists' Union will be held this year in Detroit, Mich., October 19 to 22. Headquarters will be at the Book-Cadillac Hotel where both the business and public sessions will be held. On Wednesday the Union will visit Ann Arbor where the program for that day will be presented in the Museum of the University of Michigan. An attractive program has been prepared by the Local Committee under the chairmanship of Mrs. Etta S. Wilson and arrangements have been made for several interesting trips to points in the city and in the vicinity of Detroit.

This is the second meeting to be held in the Middle West and it is hoped that many members who find it impossible to attend the conventions in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Washington will have an opportunity to attend the sessions in Detroit and take part in the various activities.

IN closing the 1931 volume of 'The Auk' the present editor completes his twentieth year in that capacity. His predecessor, the late Dr. J. A. Allen, as is generally known, served for twenty-eight years which in conjunction with his eight years editorship of the 'Nuttall Bulletin' constitutes one of the longest editorial careers in scientific literature. Owing to the constantly increasing activity of American ornithologists the size of 'The Auk' volumes has materially increased in recent years so that we find that the total numbered pages of Dr. Allen's twenty-eight volumes (exclusive of "contents" and other introductory matter) total 12,502 while those of the last twenty volumes amount to 12,464, an almost equal amount of ornithological matter as the volumes stand on the library shelf.

THE editor would again express his indebtedness to Dr. T. S. Palmer and Mr. William Vogt for their kindness in reading proof of the present number while he was suffering from illness and in the exigencies of getting the 'Check-List' through the press.

THE Check-List was unavoidably delayed at the last minute and copies were not distributed until October 1, 1931.

