

personal observation of the birds in life. There are, however, accounts of the display of several species after their arrival in the aviaries of the New York Zoo and photographs and accounts of the bowers of the 'Bower-birds,' also members of the Paradise family, as seen in the wilds. In the introduction we learn that the first specimens of Paradise birds seen by Europeans, were those of the Greater Bird of Paradise (*Paradisaea apoda*), obtained by Magellan on his voyage around the world in 1522. No living specimen reached Europe until Wallace brought some of the Lesser Bird of Paradise to the London Zoo in 1862 and none reached America until 1910. Thanks to the Crandall Expedition, however, thousands of persons visiting the zoological gardens in New York, Philadelphia and some other cities, have been able recently to see and study several different species of these wonderful creatures in life, and to watch their fascinating displays.

Mr. Crandall's book will furnish first hand recent information about life and travel in the mysterious land of New Guinea, only a small portion of which has yet been trodden by white men and the mountains of which still doubtless hold many undescribed forms of life.—W. S.

Blatchley's 'My Nature Nook.'—Mr. Blatchley, well known as an entomologist and author of several scientific monographs and lesser papers in that field, is also well versed in other branches of natural history and has furthermore the ability to write entertainingly of his experiences. The present little volume¹ is a delightful picture of Florida's Gulf coast in the neighborhood of Dunedin, where the author established a winter home in 1913, clearing his own land and eventually building his house.

On nearly every page there is mention of birds, details of the habits or actions of familiar species rather than records of rarities, and among the commoner neighbors of his home which receive due consideration may be mentioned the Red-bellied Woodpecker, Clapper Rail, Grackle, Fish Hawk, Ground Dove, Blue Jay and Loggerhead Shrike.

There is frequent mention of familiar Florida trees and shrubs, of insects and sea shells, as well as comments on the negroes and on the philosophy of life, and last but not least on the weather which the author tells us is not always the balmy springtime that it is pictured by enterprising real estate agents.

It is sad to contrast the Main Street of Dunedin as he found it in 1913 bordered with splendid live oaks, pines and cabbage palmettos with the paved street of today, largely bereft of trees, and to learn that the former "city of oaks" is now through "advancing civilization," "just another town." There is, however, still much of interest for the lover of nature in the out of the way spots on the Gulf coast of Florida and Mr. Blatchley's little book will lure many to sojourn there while to those familiar with the region it will arouse delightful reminiscences. We wonder whether the record of the

¹ My Nature Nook or Notes on the Natural History of the Vicinity of Dunedin, Florida. By W. S. Blatchley. The Nature Publishing Company, 1558 Park Ave., Indianapolis. 1931. Pp. 1-302. Price \$2.00 net.

Florida Burrowing Owl on Hog Island has been recorded elsewhere and whether the occurrence of the Snowy Owl in the same locality has been definitely authenticated.—W. S.

Doane's 'Common Pests.'—This useful and instructive book¹ deals with pests which affect man's "health, happiness and welfare" and methods for controlling them. Naturally it treats mainly of insect pests such as flies, mosquitos, fleas, etc., and pests of the garden and orchard, but there are also some twenty-five pages devoted to mammals in which poison is recommended as cheaper than trapping or shooting as a method of control. Although warning is given as to the care that should be exercised in applying it so as not to endanger live stock or game animals, the author does not seem to be aware of the various accounts of the unintentional and widespread destruction of birds by this method!

Bird pests are treated on a dozen pages. Crows and blackbirds are regarded as "on the fence" economically. The Bobolink is absolved from wrong-doing under present conditions but the Catbird and House Finch are considered to require control, at times, as are the jays and sapsuckers. Why the Robin is not mentioned when the Catbird is condemned as a berry-eater we do not understand! A proper warning is sounded against the promiscuous killing of hawks as the author says: "No hawk should be killed unless one is absolutely sure that it is one of the harmful species."

While the English Sparrow is properly condemned as a nuisance the author quotes the Biological Survey in pronouncing the Starling a valuable species. We have frequently had occasion to differ from this conclusion since in our experience the activity of the Starling in driving away or crowding out our native birds more than offsets its usefulness as an insect destroyer, and England with a far greater experience finds it a nuisance.

In the case of birds the author says, very properly, that as a means of control "poisoning is too generally destructive to be recommended" and shooting or trapping is recommended. He could well have extended this advice to the control of mammals also!

The book should fill an important gap in our economic literature so far as its main subject is concerned. It is well gotten up and fully illustrated.—W. S.

Ashbrook's 'Birds of America.'—This little pocket guide² consists of three booklets, $5\frac{1}{2} \times 3\frac{1}{4}$ ins., bound in stiff paper, the "Red," "Blue" and "Green Book of Birds of America," containing between them, in the se-

¹ Common Pests. How to Control Some of the Pests that Affect Man's Health, Happiness and Welfare. By Rennie W. Doane, Stanford University. Profusely Illustrated. Charles C. Thomas, Publisher. Springfield, Illinois, Baltimore, Maryland. 1931. Pp. 1-384 with index additional. Price \$4.00 post paid.

² The Red Book of Birds of America. By Frank G. Ashbrook. Illustrations by Paul Moller. This is one of a Series of Three Books. Copyright 1931. Whitman Publishing Co., Racine, Wisconsin. [Water birds to Woodpeckers.] The Blue Book [Goatsuckers to Finches]. The Green Book [Tanagers to Thrushes].