

### NOTES AND NEWS.

THE LOCAL COMMITTEE for the fifty-third stated meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union, at Toronto wishes it to be understood that titles of all papers must be in the hands of the Secretary, Dr. T. S. Palmer, 1939 Biltmore St. N. W., Washington, D. C., not later than October fourteenth. The Local Committee has to deal with equipment for moving pictures, the Provincial censor of titles, the customs, and finally the printing of the programs; and will not accept responsibility for titles sent in at a later date.

WE ARE pleased to announce the early publication by the American Museum of Natural History of Dr. Robert Cushman Murphy's book on the 'Oceanic Birds of South America,' based in large part upon the famous Brewster-Sanford Expedition of 1912-1917. It is to be a two-volume work sumptuously illustrated by photographs, upwards of fifty maps, numerous other text-figures, and sixteen color plates of birds from the brush of Mr. Francis L. Jaques.

The area to which the study is devoted includes the coast of South America and all the surrounding islands which form links in the chain of distribution of southern-hemisphere sea birds. Part I comprises a narrative of American Museum field work, a discussion of the oceanic life zones and their respective avifaunas, and a regional geography covering the entire South American shore line and the associated islands of the Caribbean, the Atlantic and Pacific oceans and the American section of Antarctica. Part II is devoted to biographies of about one hundred and seventy forms of oceanic birds.

M. J. DELACOUR, Secretary of the Ninth International Ornithological Congress, informs us that the date and place for this Congress has been set to come between the 1st and 15th of May, 1938, at Rouen, France.

MR. H. W. ROBINSON writes us from Lancaster, England, "I was interested to read Messrs. Noble and Vogt's article on birds copulating with mounted specimens, for over thirty years ago my mention of the fact in the press was ridiculed as a 'traveler's yarn.' I mentioned that when shooting Wood Pigeons (*Columba p. palumbus*) and Curlews (*Numenius arquata arquata*) over stuffed decoys, mounted on stands both species respectively copulated with them, not merely isolated cases but often."

A COLLECTION of birds shot on the island is being displayed in the Jubilee Gallery of the Barbados Museum with request for additional specimens from local sportsmen. Among those already displayed are a Western Sandpiper (*Ereunetes mauri*) and a Ruff (*Philomachus pugnax*) neither of which we think has been previously put on record.

NEW ZEALAND papers have been publishing an account by Mr. J. Drummond of the notable collection of New Zealand birds' eggs formed by Mr. Edgar F. Stead representing 140 species not only of birds native to the islands but also sets of species that are only winter visitants which have been obtained from correspondents far to the north.

DR. JAMES P. CHAPIN of the American Museum of Natural History was awarded the Elliot Medal of the National Academy of Sciences in recognition of his work on the Birds of the Belgian Congo.

MR. E. A. PREBLE, veteran naturalist of the U. S. Biological Survey, was retired on June 30, 1935, after forty-three years of service, beginning on April 1, 1892 when in his twenty-first year. Mr. Preble is well known for his explorations in the Athabaska Region, British Columbia, etc., and as an authority on various groups of North American mammals, and also as former editor-in-chief of the *Journal of Mammalogy*. He is an all round naturalist and his wide knowledge of wild life has for years been of the greatest service to the Government.

THE DUTCH and French Governments have officially recognized the International Office for the Protection of Nature and have appointed delegates for the mother countries and for the Dutch East Indies and the French Colonies.

MR. J. E. STILLWELL of Dallas, Texas, is continuing his excellent publicity work in behalf of Quail and of Hawks and has secured publication of educational articles in a number of the newspapers of the state.

W. L. McATEE has prepared for the Biological Survey a mimeographed popular account of the birds and other wild life of the Atlantic Coast marshes for the benefit of the CCC camps with descriptions sufficient for their identification and statements as to their economic status. This will go far to make the young men in these camps realize the value of conservation but the very nature of the work that they are ordered to do is often directly opposed to the preservation of wild life and it is unfortunate that those who direct the work cannot be made to see the evil that often results from their draining and other activities.

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION of Audubon Societies has recently established the Witmer Stone Wild Life Sanctuary, at Cape May Point, N. J., where the shooting of Hawks has been carried on for many years. A warden has been placed in charge and no shooting will be permitted in the sanctuary, while every effort is being made to restrict the shooting to the unprotected species in the adjoining area.

Through the generosity of Doctors Millicent Todd Bingham and James M. Todd, the Society has been enabled to establish the Todd Wild Life Sanctuary on an island in Muscongus Bay, on the Maine coast.

THERE HAS been purchased recently by the William Henry Smith Library, the four volume set of the elephant folio of Audubon's 'Birds of America' and the 'Ornithological Biography.' They are housed in the new Indiana State Library and Historical Building at Indianapolis. This set is one of those containing the ten plates of Lizards unretouched by Havell. It was formerly owned by the late Wm. W. Borden of Borden, Indiana.—S. E. PERKINS, III.

THE DUCK controversy has been waging all year; conservationists have pled for a one year's closed season; arms and ammunition manufacturers are opposed; sportsmen's organizations seem to be about equally divided. Many circulars and pamphlets have been published and direct appeals made to the Secretary of Agriculture.

On July 30 the President of the United States issued a proclamation "recommended by the Biological Survey and adopted by R. G. Tugwell, the acting Secretary of Agriculture" allowing an open season of 30 days in each of the two zones into which the country is divided—Oct. 21–Nov. 19 in the north (to Long Island, Pennsylvania, Illinois, etc.) and Nov. 20–Dec. 19 in the south (New Jersey to Kentucky and Oklahoma, southward). This settles the matter for 1935.

The Survey in announcing the open season stresses the elimination of sink boxes, batteries, baiting and live decoys, the further reduction of certain bag limits and the limiting of repeating shot guns to three shells.

All this helps; but will it save the Ducks? The National Association of Audubon Societies calls attention to the fact that the shooting season begins in Alberta, Canada, on September 1 and closes in Louisiana on December 19, so that even though there are but 30 shooting days in any one spot, the migrating Ducks face a barrage of 110 days on their southward flight! Mr. John H. Baker, Executive Director says further (and we fully agree), that Chief Darling of the Survey has striven earnestly to arrive at the recommendation he deems best. "We are sore at heart that he has felt impelled to advocate an open season this year but let us give credit where credit is due and hail his courage and wisdom in recommending the permanent outlawing of baiting, live decoys, batteries and sink boxes." The Audubon Association also quotes Chief Darling to the effect that there are at present 18 to 20 million Ducks in the country and as 600,000 Duck stamps were sold last year, it figures that there are left only about 40 Ducks per gunner!

The Biological Survey Bulletin announcing the open season says, "there will be violent protests from those who believe the season should be closed and equally loud complaints from those shooters who believe the Survey is being over cautious." The Survey does not regard the open season and the prohibitions already referred to as a compromise but as "progress toward restoration without breaking down existing State and Federal law-enforcement organizations by the imposition of an impossible load." In other words it apparently fears that the enforcement of an absolutely closed season would be impossible without many additional wardens, whereas the loss of license fees upon which enforcement now depends, would greatly reduce the warden forces and result in a vast increase in illegal gunning. Probably no one can accurately weigh the arguments advanced by the two sides; no one can realize the pressure brought to bear nor the part that politics has played in the matter.

The die is cast and by this time next year we shall probably know, in a measure at least, who was right.

