RECENT LITERATURE

Audubon's 'Birds of America,' 1941.—The success of the 1937 edition of Audubon's plates in a single volume which sold for \$12.50, was so far beyond expectations, that the publishers now bring out this new edition¹ at a price that will be even more popular. The chief difference is, however, that only the 435 plates of the original elephant-folio set are now reproduced, while the 65 additional plates of the previous volume are omitted. The frontispiece shows the fine Cruickshank portrait of Audubon, and there is the same introductory Preface by William Vogt. The four lines of text at the bottom of each plate, in double column, were prepared by the same author and give in briefest form the range, habitat, identification marks, voice, breeding and food habits, or in certain cases special notes. At the back of the volume is a list of the original legends to the plates together with an index of the common names of the species shown.

Printed from the same set of plates used in the previous edition, the vivid figures are in the main well reproduced, except that as in all such color work, there are occasional instances where the colors seem too red or too pale or in some other way are not quite as they should be. But it must be remembered too, that the originals are not maps of the birds' colors but rather show the color values as they appeared to the artist's eye. The avidity with which the public absorbed the previous edition indicates the wide desire for a set of the famous plates at a moderate price. This new volume now makes them available to nearly all who are interested in Audubon and his work.—G. M. ALLEN.

'Factors Affecting the General Status of Wild Geese and Wild Duck.'—Although this report² is volume one of the International Wildfowl Inquiry, volume two has already been published and reviewed in 'The Auk,' 57: 583–584, 1940, to which the reader is referred for information on background. The inquiry is European in scope, and indeed the two reports so far issued are the work of an English committee; the North American references are entirely incidental. Curiously enough, the whole project seems to have been set in motion by "the startling news . . . that the United States of America had practically limited the shooting of wild duck to one month in the year, [which] pointed to a grave state of affairs." On the showing of the present report, and making due allowance for the profound differences in hunting methods and pressures on the two continents, it may be wondered whether waterfowl conditions are not quite as unfavorable in Europe as in North America, and much less susceptible of quick improvement.

There are eight separate papers in this collection, dealing with as many different topics and each prepared by a different author or group of authors. The general effect is to outline the more pressing aspects of the problem, summarize existing information, and thus prepare the way for both action and further detailed investigation. The first section is introductory, and lists nine factors which have operated in recent years to decrease European waterfowl. At least five of these are of world-wide importance:—increased facilities of travel, commercialization attendant on improved methods of cold storage, increased penetration of the

¹Audubon, John James. The Birds of America with a Foreword and descriptive Captions by William Vogt. Large 8vo, xxvi pp., 436 pls., 1941; The Macmillan Co., New York City. Price \$4.95.

² International Wildfowl Inquiry / Volume I / Factors Affecting the General Status of Wild Geese and Wild Duck / 8vo, x + 123 pp., 22 figs. and maps, 1941; Cambridge University Press, The Macmillan Co., New York City. Price \$2.25.

far North by man, ill-considered reclamation of swamp-land, and intensive agricultural methods.

A series of reports on breeding conditions in the North covers Greenland, Iceland, Spitsbergen and Norwegian Lapland. Northeast Greenland appears to be the great reservoir of supply for those Brant, Barnacle Geese, and Pink-footed Geese which winter in the British Isles, and because of its extreme inaccessibility is rated as safe "for many years to come." In Iceland the breeding Pinkfeet are nearly extirpated as a result of unrestrained egging, and numerous species of ducks are severely reduced by local agricultural practises. In Spitsbergen, Eiders, Barnacles, Brant, and Pinkfeet are levied upon mercilessly by sealers and egg-hunters from Norway; the Eiders can stand it, but the geese and particularly Brant, are in a precarious position. Lapland is considered satisfactory.

A well-balanced paper on the status and significance for waterfowl of certain aquatic plants of the genera Zostera, Ruppia, Potamogeton, Zannichellia, Ulva, and Enteromorpha supplies background information for the English worker, but has nothing not already familiar to the American. A survey of British 'decoys' (the name used for a system of netting wild ducks in large water-traps) indicates that they are dying out rapidly, at least on a commercial scale, with the total average catch now running to only about 12,000 per year. The decoy system in Holland, on the contrary, is powerfully intrenched and is estimated to take at least a million ducks a year-possibly one and one-half million. The business has gone on for centuries, however. A survey of punt-gunning in the British Isles tends to show that this much-criticized method of taking waterfowl is not unduly harmful per se-that average daily and yearly bags are very much smaller than usually claimed by opponents of the practise. Punt-gunning having long since faded from the American scene, the argument need not be further reported. Two papers on the results of duck-banding in England and on the Continent, with excellent maps showing distribution of recoveries, are chiefly of interest to the English waterfowl-manager. The material on which they are based does not approach American data for quantity or coverage, and no new principles are adduced.

The eighth paper, on "close time," is certain to shock the American reader quite as much as European ornithologists may have been dismayed by a onemonth open season in the United States. It appears that the most recent legislation in the British Isles provides a closed season from February 1 to August 11, except that on tidal shores shooting may be continued by local ordinance until February 20. Sale of waterfowl is permitted between August 11 and February 28. Importation is legal between August 11 and February 1. Further, a careful compilation of the regulations for other European countries shows the shooting season starting June r in Czechoslovakia, July 1 in Austria, July 15 in Rumania and Belgium, July 16 in Germany, July 18 in France, August 2 in Holland; closing March 31 in France and Germany, April 15 in Austria, Belgium and Bulgaria and May 3r in Poland.

Summing up the book as a whole, it represents an intelligent start on problems which were attacked on this continent at least twenty-five years ago. The reviewer's principal reaction is a renewed and grateful comprehension of the advantages which North Americans have at hand in the fight to save waterfowl. On this side, we see Americans and Canadians working harmoniously for the protection of a stock of waterfowl whose vast range lies almost wholly within the political control of two friendly governments. In England on the contrary, an attempt to improve the status of waterfowl is handicapped at once by the fact that breeding ranges and migration routes lie in or over Greenland, Iceland, Spitsbergen, at least seven existing or former Scandinavian and Baltic countries, and three or more southern European countries, the governments of all but Greenland, Iceland, and Russia being at present hostile, captive, or in exile. The comparison is thought-provoking far beyond the realm of ornithology.—JOSEPH A. HAGAR.

Ridgway and Friedmann's 'Birds of North and Middle America' Part 9.-Twentytwo years have elapsed since the publication, in June 1919, of Part 8 of this great systematic work on North American birds. Dr. Friedmann, as Ridgway's successor, now gives us Part 9, containing a concise review¹ of the Gruiformes found from Panama to the arctic regions, and in his brief Introduction tells us that the tenth part, containing the Galliformes, is in preparation. On the death of Robert Ridgway, the late Dr. Charles W. Richmond assembled all available manuscript notes of Ridgway, which covered diagnoses of genera and higher groups as well as partial synonymies for many species and subspecies. Wherever possible these have been utilized by Dr. Friedmann who has modestly desired that the continuation of the work should as far as possible be Ridgway's. Nevertheless it has been a task of magnitude to coordinate all this material, to bring the literary references to date, and to make the final parts reflect the state of current knowledge. In the intervening years four volumes of Peters's 'Check List of Birds of the World' have appeared, which, beginning with the 'lower' groups and proceeding to the 'higher' forms, treat them therefore in reverse order from Ridgway whose first part commences with the Fringillidae. In the present Part 9, Dr. Friedmann has accordingly arranged the families, genera and species to conform with Peters's treatment in order that the two works shall offer the least amount of difficulty in following them.

In all, seventy-two species and subspecies are formally treated, representing five families; in addition a number of allied extra-limital forms are included in the keys to facilitate comparisons. The full diagnoses of order, families, genera and species with their races will be of great value to all systematists as well as to others wishing in concise form a statement of the trenchant characters. Sixteen well-executed text-figures show the important characters of bill, feet, wings and tail. The final account of each form includes a description of all the plumages, the measurements, range in summer and winter, the type locality and the important references in literature. The last item is brought down to date and forms a convenient index to the more important papers. A few changes, such as the relegation of the North American clapper rails to subspecific rank under *Rallus longirostris* of South America, as proposed by Oberholser, and the use of *Laterallus* and *Porphyrula* for *Cresiscus* and *Ionornis* of the last A. O. U. 'Check-list' are adopted with proper synonymy.

A very few printers' errors were detected: the misspelling of Jaques on page 18 and of Dover, N. H., on page 200 were noted in passing; also the use of Roman numerals for volume numbers in the synonymies might now be given up since the Arabic numerals are less liable to produce mistakes in reading or copying. It is a satisfaction to know that this great work is now continuing after a long

¹ Ridgway, Robert, and Friedmann, Herbert. 'The Birds of North and Middle America.' Bull. U. S. Nat. Mus., no. 50: ix + 254 pp., 16 figs., Oct. 1941. Price in paper covers, 40 cents (Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C.).

breathing-space and under the able authorship of Dr. Friedmann, may in time be carried to completion.-G. M. ALLEN.

Tyson and Bond's 'Birds of Mt. Desert Island, Acadia National Park' is another local guide to birds likely to be seen by the summer visitor, especially in the Acadia National Park. It assumes, however, that the casual tourist is already somewhat familiar with eastern birds and has access to some one of the various handbooks for identification of any unfamiliar species. These are therefore listed in the main chapter on summer birds in the 'Check-list' order, by vernacular names only, with for each a few brief remarks on characteristic ways or notes or distribution in the region. Following sixteen half-tone plates of common species in the center of the booklet, there is a briefly annotated list of birds reported from the island and its outlying islets and from the adjacent mainland of Hancock County, with Latin and common names.

It is now over thirty years since the appearance of Knight's 'Birds of Maine' in 1908, hence the more particular value of the work may lie in the fact that it brings to notice various changes that have taken place in the local avifauna and adds a few important records (as well as some admittedly doubtful). Among interesting changes in recent years are: increase of certain nesting species as Great Black-backed and Herring Gulls, to which the authors suggest the steady decline in numbers of terns may be due, through their usurping the terns' nesting areas. Ravens have become more numerous on the outlying islands, while Winter Wrens have at the same time dwindled in numbers owing to clearing of undergrowth by C. C. C. boys. The Ruby-crowned Kinglet, it is interesting to note, is "now fairly common and widespread as a summer resident on Mt. Desert Island" though formerly very rare, while Lincoln's Finch is now found to breed both on the island and on the adjacent mainland. It would have added much to the value of this booklet¹ if such changes could have been given in more detail. However, it was doubtless the design of the authors to provide merely a stimulus and guide for summer people. The guide is of pocket size, clearly printed, and bound in stiff paper covers and should prove useful to those visiting the region.-G. M. ALLEN.

Mrs. Wheeler's 'We Follow the Western Trail' is a nature-lover's book² written by an enthusiastic camper and observant outdoor-liver, telling of inspiring summer outings chiefly in the mountains and coasts of California where, on foot and by automobile, much thrilling scenery was reached, abundant bird life watched, and other minor adventures lived. The volume holds a good deal of interesting detail, some of it well presented, as in the chapter on forest fires; and always the author and her family have much to see and photograph. While there is no pretense of producing a work on natural history, there is much that is interesting as a picture of phases of bird life, such as the nesting of Rosy Finches with the excellent photographs of these high-altitude birds, while other species afford a comfortable variety. The book is intended rather for pleasant companionship to encourage others to go forth and allow their emotional feelings to be stirred by the splendors of the western scenery and its wild life. Not too large, nor too long, it is of convenient size for perusal at one or two sittings and is not too expensive.—G. M. ALLEN.

¹ Tyson, Carroll, and Bond, James. Birds of Mt. Desert Island, Acadia National Park, Maine. sm. 8vo, 82 pp., 16 pls., map, 1941; Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, Penna. Price \$1.00.

² Wheeler, Ruth. We Follow the Western Trail. 8vo, xiv + 160 pp., illustr., 1941; The Macmillan Company, 60 Fifth Ave., New York City. Price \$2.00.

Kendeigh's 'Territorial and Mating Behavior of the House Wren' is a wellprepared summary of the essential points involved in the choice and function of the breeding territory and in the mating activities of the House Wren, gleaned from the minute study of the species over a nineteen-year period at the Baldwin Bird Research Laboratory near Cleveland, Ohio. It is thus perhaps the longest continuous study of a limited population of any species of bird yet published in which, through banding, the activities of individual birds have been carefully followed season by season.

Much of the method of the work is now familiar from previously published papers. Over successive breeding periods the 'territories' delimited by the settled male birds have been mapped, the doings of each pair have been followed and the various changes of territory in successive broods and seasons have been recorded. The males arrive first, and in successive years the adult males tend to arrive slightly earlier with increasing age. The earlier arrivals are therefore the older males which select their territories and examine available nest sites within the territory, marking each with a few or more sticks laid in as if in preparation for a nest. Females arrive somewhat later and often remate with the same male as in the preceding year. Approximately three-fourths of all adult birds tend to renest within a thousand feet of the spot where they nested the year before. While the male defends his chosen area, the female is less concerned with its exact limits. The practised observer can distinguish three types of song by the male, a territory song, a mating song, and a nesting song, each associated with a different emotional state at the nesting period. Defense reactions in holding territory are carefully described, and it is shown that minute differences in behavior may be of considerable meaning. Variation and changes in the territorial limits occur as nesting proceeds or with successive broods.

Other chapters deal with reproductive vigor, mating behavior, and the progress of the cycle. Finally there is an extensive series of individual case histories illustrating with maps and descriptions the changes in territorial limits from brood to brood and from year to year. An interesting account is given of the relations with other hole-nesting competitors especially the Bluebird and the English Sparrow. The average territory is about one acre in extent, but varies inversely with the size of the breeding population. There is a non-breeding population of wrens amounting to from 28 to 35 per cent of the total male population, and roughly half as many non-breeding females. Polygyny occurs in about 6 per cent of all nestings, and there is an interesting comparison with other species of wrens in which this type of mating is known. Since the young birds scatter and appear in later years in very small proportion, there is small chance of inbreeding.

These and many other interesting points observed over the period of years conduce to make this^t a paper of first importance in the exact study of wren behavior.—G. M. ALLEN.

Griscom and Greenway's 'Birds of Lower Amazonia.'--This important report² is based chiefly on (1) a collection of over 4000 skins secured by A. M. Olalla in 1932 and 1933, and now in the Museum of Comparative Zoology; (2) the great Klages collection of over 7300 specimens in the Carnegie Museum at Pittsburgh;

¹Kendeigh, S. Charles. 'Territorial and Mating Behavior of the House Wren.' Illinois Biological Monographs, 18: no. 3, 120 pp., 1941; Univ. of Illinois Press, Urbana, III. Price \$1.50.

² Griscom, Ludlow, and Greenway, James C., Jr. 'Birds of Lower Amazonia.' Bull. Mus. Comp. Zoology, 88: 83-344, June 1941.

and (3) a thorough survey of pertinent literature. In the task of identifying carefully all this material, the authors have compiled a list of all species known from the western boundaries of the State of Pará, eastward along the Amazon River, to the sea, including therefore a vast stretch of the lower Amazon Valley, on both banks of the great river. Owing to the fact that this is country traversable chiefly by water, the collecting stations are along the larger tributaries and the intervening banks of the Amazon.

Dr. Snethlage's 'Aves Amazonicas' of 1914 is now long out of date so that this modern and critical estimate of the birds of the region is very welcome and not only affords a better view of the avifauna but also adds many overlooked older records. In all, 972 species and subspecies are listed, a relatively large number, of which only 42 are regarded as migrants or winter visitants while of these all but nine are from the north and include mainly waterbirds. The Amazon Valley shows very little relief and was regarded by Dr. Snethlage as showing three main types of ecological habitat: (1) low land subject to flooding in the rainy season, and including (a) primeval forest and (b) open savannahs or campos; (2) higher ground, never flooded, with again primeval forest and savannahs; and (3) scrub growth of at least two types where the original forest has been destroyed. There are nevertheless in this relatively uniform moist-tropical forest, ecological areas, where local subspecies differentiate or local endemic species survive. The larger rivers themselves often form ecological barriers for some birds but not for others. Thus the ant-birds break up into numerous subspecies but other groups in the same area may not show corresponding changes. There are numerous exceptions and anomalies so that few general rules can be established; but at least six groups of species can be recognized as having distinct types of distribution. Thus the greatest number of endemic species is found on the south side of the Amazon, while again there is evidence of a relatively recent invasion from the west, north and south that may still be going on.

In a previous paper, published in 1937, the authors have described a number of new forms and Mr. Todd has published several papers on the novelties in the Klages collection. Only one new race is added in the present paper, a cuckoo, Neomorphus squamiger iungens, from Boim, Tapajos River. In the list of species, the type locality of each is given, with a summary of previous records, and then a list of the specimens in the Olalla collection. There is much comment with useful critical observations, which render this a valuable and suggestive paper. At the same time the treatment is conservative and the authors point out how little is really known of the habitat preferences of literally hundreds of species. A surprising record is that of Dr. Snethlage of the Brown Pelican on the Rio Tapajos. The Water-turkey of Brazil is typical Anhinga anhinga anhinga, a series of which made possible for the first time a careful comparison with Florida birds. As a result, it appears that the latter are smaller, with shorter bills, while the tail-tip is much narrower (at least half as wide). For this northern race, Vieillot's name is revived and the bird of Cuba and southern United States should stand as Anhinga anhinga leucogaster, type locality Florida.

A brief bibliography lists important papers since the inclusive works of Snethlage and Hellmayr, but an index is lacking. The paper forms an important milestone in our knowledge of the lower Amazonian avifauna.-G. M. ALLEN. Palmer on Behavior of Common Terns.—This study¹ of the Common Tern is not intended to be a summary of all known facts but a description and analysis of behavior and a discussion of relevant observations. The data were obtained on the coast of Maine during the seasons of 1938 and 1939. Part I describes the environment in the breeding season, pointing out that isolation, adequate food, and suitable topography for nesting sites are the three requirements for a nesting colony.

Part II discusses behavior in detail. The birds do not come to the actual nesting territory for several days after their arrival in the vicinity of the nesting sites. The occupation of the ternery occurs during the performance of a mutual 'fish flight,' in which either sex may take either part. Courtship consists of certain posturing, parading, the making of scrapes, and aerial glides. Sex is discriminated on the ground near the nest site by means of behavior. The sexual bond is maintained in part by the aerial glide. The pair possesses a 'sexual' (nesting) territory about three feet in diameter from which intruders are expelled by both sexes. The birds congregate on a common ground for resting and preening. Posturing serves at least five different uses in the breeding activities of the pair. Copulation occurs after preliminary ceremonies. The eggs, laid in one of the numerous scrapes, are incubated for an average of 23 days, principally by the female. Substitute activities are prominent in the life of terns, consisting of preening, playing with nesting material, making scrapes, and courting. Social reactions during the breeding cycle consist of up-flights, social attack on predators, fishing, bathing, flocking and preening. The birds leave the ternery in small groups after the breeding is completed.

The above summary gives some indication of the mass of observational detail contained in this report. A few points of adverse criticism occur to the reviewer. The author does not state the dates of his observations on the colony. Many references of an inconsequential nature are included (e. g., Shaw on p. 16). The use of the term "social parasites" (p. 28) in reference to jaegers is confusing to those accustomed to the accepted usage in reference to Cowbirds. On p. 34 a figure of 35% mortality of chicks is given without supporting data. On p. 43, the author suggests that the pair remains mated over the winter period. Another possible explanation of the fact that the same birds are paired in more than one season, is that both return to the same territory, thus, in truth, repairing. The likelihood that pairing is hormonally controlled suggests that, since these substances are not present in the non-breeding season, the sexual bond is not maintained throughout the year. Some topics (e. g., ovulation, p. 68) are extensively treated without reference to the Common Tern. The pertinence of this compilation of the literature is not apparent to the reviewer. One last point seems worthy of emphasis. Much use is made of the hypothesis that behavior of other individuals influences, through the mediation of the pituitary, the activities of the gonads. This hypothesis as yet has no experimental endocrinological support and is so oft repeated in zoological writings that it is in danger of becoming accepted as a fact. Until we have adequate experimental evidence, the hypothesis of the 'synchronization' of the sexes should be used with caution. The report greatly increases our knowledge of the actions of the birds and the thirty line-drawings, traced from photographs, are an excellent contribution to the technic for studying behavior .- DAVID E. DAVIS.

¹ Palmer, Ralph S. 'A Behavior Study of the Common Tern (Sterna hirundo hirundo L.)'. Proc. Boston Soc. Nat. Hist., 42: 1-119, charts 1-2, plates 1-14, 1941.

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