

RECENT LITERATURE

Birds collected by Loveridge in eastern Africa.¹—From November 1938 to July 1939 Arthur Loveridge traveled from Mombasa to Uganda, Lakes Kivu and Tanganyika, and then to the southern coast of Tanganyika Territory. Though mainly concerned with reptiles and amphibia, he assembled also a collection of birds which comprised 809 skins, and represented 246 different forms. This systematic report includes taxonomic remarks and some very useful notes on food, nesting, and native names of a number of the species. It will be of interest to students of geographic distribution in Africa.

One new species of warbler, *Apalis eidos*, was discovered on Idjwi Island in Lake Kivu, and the records of many birds from that island are particularly valuable. Though most of them are known also from the western side of Lake Kivu, one small barbet, *Pogoniulus bilineatus jacksoni*, is an East African bird that occurs in numbers on Idjwi Island, and yet apparently nowhere around the shores of the lake. There it is replaced by *P. leucolaima mfumbiri*. Among the rarer birds secured are *Myioceyx lecontei ugandae* from the Budongo forest, hitherto known only from van Someren's own specimens, and *Batis reichenowi* of southern Tanganyika Territory, represented previously by Grote's three specimens.—JAMES P. CHAPIN.

Mayr's List of New Guinea Birds.²—The region dealt with includes, in addition to the mainland of New Guinea, the Western Papuan Islands, the islands in Geelvink Bay, Vulcan and Dampier Islands off the north coast of New Guinea, the D'Entrecasteaux, Woodlark and Louisiade Archipelagoes to the east, and the Aru Islands to the south. This area extends roughly NW.-SE. from long. 130° E. to 154° E. a distance of over 1400 miles and at its widest point attains a width of about 420 miles; it lies between the Equator and lat. 12° S. The area is very diversified, with the highest altitude about 16400 feet. As might be expected the New Guinea region is very rich in bird life. Dr. Mayr lists 1501 forms (species and subspecies) of which 1400 are breeding land and fresh water birds, 22 sea birds and the remaining 79 are migrants either from the Palaearctic region or from Australia and New Zealand.

The classification used is a composite one; the sequence of orders and families of the non-Passerine groups is that proposed by Wetmore, while the Passeres are arranged according to the system published by Stresemann in Kükenthal's Handbuch.

The general arrangement is very similar to that employed in the A. O. U. and similar Check-Lists, that is the current name is given, followed by the reference to the original description, any synonyms since 1880, and the range. For each species there is also a statement of habitat and altitudinal distribution which is most valuable. This feature could be employed to advantage in other Check-Lists.

Dr. Mayr's "List of New Guinea Birds" fills a long felt want as an aid to the study of Papuan ornithology; it furnishes a fresh starting point from which subsequent workers may undertake further studies. Dr. Mayr's generic and specific concepts are broad; his use of genera expresses relationships rather than emphasizes

¹ Peters, James L., and Arthur Loveridge. 'Scientific Results of a Fourth Expedition to Forested Areas in East and Central Africa, II, Birds,' Bull. Mus. Comp. Zool., 89: 217-275, 3 pls., Feb. 21, 1942.

² Mayr, Ernst. List of New Guinea Birds. A Systematic and Faunal List of Birds of New Guinea and Adjacent Islands. The American Museum of Natural History, New York, N. Y. 8vo, xi + 260 pp., 1 map, 1941. Price \$2.00.

minor structural differences and his species have wide limits, though the Formenkreis theory is not carried to extremes.

Furthermore, in certain cases it is indicated by footnote that a superspecies is involved. This is a useful concept which cannot at present conveniently and understandably be indicated by our trinomial system.

The list is the result of nearly twelve years of study of the region which comprises not only actual field experience but also examination of unrivalled material and personal examination of nearly every type specimen of the many described from New Guinea and the adjacent islands, consequently it bears every outward sign of authoritativeness.—J. L. PETERS.

The Fulmar in the British Isles.¹—A remarkable increase in the population of the Fulmar has been one of the striking biological phenomena of the last two or more generations. Multiplication of numbers has been concomitant with a great extension in range, and nowhere have the combined effects been more conspicuous than in the neighborhood of the British Isles. As the authors of the present study point out, the species has been known to British ornithologists since the earliest times, but until the late 19th century it was thought of as an Arctic bird which had established an outpost only at the island of St. Kilda. Subsequent to the '70's of the last century, the range and population have undergone increases remarkably similar to those of the human population of Britain since the Industrial Revolution.

Messrs. Fisher and Waterston have made use of the data in 800 cited publications, and of the testimony of nearly 200 recent observers, in their study of the expansion of the Fulmar population from a possible or probable source at St. Kilda to colonies which cover many islands to the north, as well as extensive stretches of coast in Great Britain and Ireland. These now include stations in a more southerly latitude than any others in the world. The subject is considered in vast detail from the geographic, biological and statistical points of view. Various hypotheses to account for the changes are tested and found wanting. For example, the theory has been advanced that since the beginning of trade in preserved food-stuffs in 1877, the human inhabitants of St. Kilda have ceased to kill the usual number of young Fulmars, and have thus permitted a more rapid increase of the petrels. This theory is discredited by facts presented by the authors, and even the disappearance of the human population of St. Kilda, through migration to Australia, etc., can have no significant bearing upon an ornithological development that has shown the same characteristics over very wide areas.

The increase in Fulmar population of Iceland has been recorded, for example, since 1820, and even the prohibition against taking young ones—because of outbreaks of psittacosis—and a consequent reduction in the annual harvest of 100,000 birds, is not sufficient to explain the phenomenon under discussion.

In short, the spread of the Fulmar is "due to a biological change which is not understood." It has no predatory enemies in the Atlantic, save man himself, and the authors predict a continuance and enhancement of the growth of range and population.

This outline of the main thesis of a notable study gives scarcely a hint of its wealth of incidental biological information of great interest and meaning. The paper is a credit to the British Trust for Ornithology, which has sponsored it.—ROBERT CUSHMAN MURPHY.

¹ Fisher, James, and Waterston, George. 'The breeding distribution, history and population of the Fulmar (*Fulmarus glacialis*) in the British Isles.' Jour. Anim. Ecol., 10 (No. 2): 204-272, pls. 4-8, 18 figs., Nov., 1941.

A popular guide to general ornithology.¹—In this vest-pocket volume there is a wealth of information condensed between the paper covers. It is a book designed for amateurs with no zoological training and is written so clearly and simply that the veriest beginners can understand it, but there are very few branches of ornithology that are not at least mentioned. Emphasis is, of course, placed on those fields in which the amateur can busy himself and there are many suggestions on what to do and how to go about it. Frequent references are given to current and standard literature where fuller details may be found if the reader cares to look for them. As is to be expected, examples for the subjects are drawn from British bird life in most cases, though not exclusively, and readers in America will find the booklet highly instructive on general principles and, in addition, will learn something about British birds, though it is not, in any sense, a manual for the identification of species.—JOHN T. ZIMMER.

Adventure in Australia.²—In 1838, John Gould, who needs no introduction to ornithological readers, set sail for Australia to pursue his self-appointed task with reference to the birds of that country. In his party was John Gilbert to whose indefatigable labors Gould was to be indebted for much of the collection on which he based his book on Australian birds. Gilbert remained in Australia after Gould's return to England and visited many remote parts of the island-continent. In 1844 he joined an expedition led by Ludwig Leichhardt, who planned to travel overland from Moreton Bay to Port Essington through then totally unknown country. Most of the party reached their destination, long overdue, but Gilbert was killed by natives at an unknown spot along the way.

In 1938, Australian naturalists planned to celebrate the centenary of Gould's arrival in the country and Mr. Chisholm was in London searching for fresh information concerning him and the members of his party, particularly Gilbert, of whom little was known. To his surprised good fortune he found a voluminous diary kept by Gilbert and turned over to Gould by Leichhardt who preserved it after Gilbert had been murdered. From this mine of information the present volume has been prepared from which Gilbert rises with added stature while Leichhardt subsides to the level of an incompetent adventurer. It is a highly interesting narrative.

One could wish that there were more of Gilbert's observations on bird life as he observed it a century ago. Mr. Chisholm has, however, chosen to delete most of this (we hope for future publication elsewhere) in the fear that it might not interest the general reader. In any case, the part that is presented here gives us the story of a little-known naturalist whose labors added to the glory of a better known one, and it is sure to appeal to any one interested in Australia or the history of Australian ornithology.—JOHN T. ZIMMER.

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¹ Fisher, James. *Watching Birds*. 16mo, 192 pp., figs. 1–35, 1940 (reprinted Sept., 1941); Pelican Books. Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England.

² Chisholm, Alec H. *Strange New World. The Adventures of John Gilbert and Ludwig Leichhardt*. 8vo, xxii + 382 pp., 25 pls., 2 maps, 1941; Angus and Robertson, Ltd., Sydney; London.

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