Ptilology—a proposed name for the general study of the plumage of birds.—In 1867, the Ray Society, of London, published in its 'Transactions' a translation of the first important treatise on feathers—the work of the German ornithologist, C. L. Nitzsch. It was entitled "Pterylography" and dealt primarily with the pterylae or feather tracts of birds, although it also included a brief but good description of the general structure of feathers.

Nitzsch's work has been followed by many other papers, which have dealt with the structure and color and the taxonomic characters of feathers, as well as numerous peculiar adaptations. Much of this research has been based on the examination of feather structures under the microscope and has been progressively more thorough, but the published literature on the subject is still discouragingly meager.

Men engaged in serious study in a virgin scientific field should logically have in common a name descriptive of that field, but this has not been true of those doing research work on feathers.

Nitzsch's name, 'pterylography,' applies to the study or description of the feather tracts, the pterylae; and another term, 'pterylology,' deals with the study of the arrangement of the feather tracts. Neither term is sufficiently inclusive to describe the general study of the plumage of birds.

In my work with the former Bureau of Biological Survey, now the Fish and Wildlife Service, and subsequently, I have found a special need for a term descriptive of my restricted field, the comparative study of microscopic feather structure as it pertains to the identification of fragments from the stomachs of animals.

This need has become pressing, and I hereby propose two terms, which are descriptive of the general field and my special branch. These terms may be defined as follows:

pti-lol'o-gy (tĭ lŏl ŏ jĭ), n. [*ptilon* down, a feather, a wing + *logy* science of.] *Zool.* The study of ptilosis, a term meaning the plumage of birds, irrespective of pterylosis.

mi-crop-ti-lol'o-gy (mī crŏp tĭ lŏl ŏ jĭ), n. [*mikros* small + *ptilon* + *logy*.] *Zool.* The study of feather structure not visible to the unaided eye.

The definitions of pterylography, pterylology, pterylosis, and ptilosis, as they are given in Webster's dictionary, 2nd edition, unabridged, have been accepted as standard in the formulation of the two definitions given above.—FRANKLIN H. MAY, *210 Spruce Avenue, Takoma Park, Maryland.*

Sinaloa Martin nesting in western Mexico.—In an article entitled 'Unusual Birds and Extensions of Ranges in Sonora, Sinaloa and Chihuahua, Mexico' (Condor, 50, No. 1: 23, Jan.–Feb., 1938), the author recorded the collecting at San Feliz, Chihuahua, of the first females of this rare martin, which had been known previously only from the topotypical series reported by Nelson (Proc. Biol. Soc. Wash., 12: 59, Mar. 24, 1898) from "Plomosas," Sinaloa, at a slightly lower altitude. There also are two specimens from La Laja, Jalisco, intermediate in their characters, but nearer *sinaloae*. The collector, Chester C. Lamb, had reason to believe that the San Feliz birds represented a nesting colony, and recorded in his journal: "Quite a colony are nesting in some hole in the sycamores." However, this was not factual evidence to prove the breeding, an assumption that has been gravely doubted by several authorities. There was good ground for the belief that this far western form, dependent for its validity on smaller size, entirely white under tail-coverts, and black tips to feathers of dorsal surface, according to the describer, represented an