

RECENT LITERATURE

Bent's 'Life histories.'¹—The long-awaited 'trade-edition' of U. S. National Museum Bulletin 107 is now at hand and will make a welcome addition to the book-shelves of those ornithologists who have been unable to secure copies of the original. As is well known, only 2500 copies of the original edition were printed, which were believed to be amply sufficient for future demands. So popular did this and succeeding numbers of the series become that the supply of the first few, particularly that of the present title, soon became exhausted and have long been virtually unobtainable *desiderata* of the first water. The present volume will, therefore, serve to give many bird students access to Mr. Bent's informative discussions of the life histories of the species treated in this opening part.

Of the text itself, no comment is needed here. It was long since reviewed in the pages of *The Auk* and elsewhere on the appearance of the original edition (1919) and has ably stood the test of time. The present comments, therefore, need concern themselves only with the quality of the new edition.

The first thing a reader familiar with the original will notice is the absence of the colored plates of eggs that were a feature of the first and second (no. 113, 1921) bulletins though not continued in subsequent numbers. The remaining illustrations are, in the main, those of the original edition, apparently from new plates, with some omissions (there were originally 43 half-tone plates) and several new pictures. A photograph taken on Walrus Island, Alaska, originally illustrating the Paroquet Auklet is here placed with the Least Auklet, but since the original explanation of the plates (omitted from the new letterpress) lists both species for the locality photographed, the transfer is justifiable.

The text is in most respects, an extremely close copy of the original. The type-bed is slightly larger and the type slightly larger and clearer, but for the most part the reissue follows the original copy line for line and page for page with minor deviation. Some changes in typography are to be noticed, such as in the headings of the various species and in the figures for the measurements of eggs, presumably for the purpose of eliminating bold-faced lettering. The explanation of the plates has been omitted with consequent change in the pagination of the index which is further altered in composition though not in content. These do not affect the authenticity of the text.

Several alterations have been made, however, that tend to dispute with the publishers' claim of the reprint as "unrevised" (p. [I]). The 'Puffin' of the original edition is emended to 'Atlantic Puffin'; 'Loon' to 'Common Loon'; 'American Eared Grebe' to 'Eared Grebe'; and '*Uria troille troille*' and '*Uria troille californica*' to '*Uria aalge aalge*' and '*Uria aalge californica*', respectively. '*Aethia christatella*' is an error repeated in the Table of Contents but not in the Index. 'Eared Grebe' and 'Atlantic Puffin' are given in the Table, but the other alterations are not, nor are any of them changed in the Index which follows the original nomenclature. A note by Thomas S. Roberts on the Eared Grebe has been omitted from page 32 of the text but is still indexed as though present.

The nomenclatural alterations are not explained. If they were intended to make the names agree with the 4th edition of the A. O. U. Check-List (published subsequent to the original edition of the Bulletin), there are various others that should have been made at the same time. It is questionable if any should have been made in a reprint of this sort.

¹ BENT, ARTHUR CLEVELAND. 'Life histories of North American diving birds. Order Pygopodes.' 8vo, XIII + 237, 32 pls., 1946. Dodd, Mead & Company, New York. \$5.00.

None of these criticisms seriously affect the value of this edition. Mr. Bent's text (except for the omitted quotation from Roberts) appears to be unaltered and it is that for which the Bulletin and the present edition are valuable. Readers will find the original wealth of first-hand and quoted observation that have made the 'Life Histories' an authoritative source book of information about our native birds.

It is hoped that the present volume will receive a sufficiently favorable reception by the public to encourage the publishers to continue their project of reprinting the remainder of the series.—J. T. ZIMMER.

Birds of North and Middle America.¹—The present welcome instalment of this invaluable work is, like the preceding part, the work of Dr. Friedmann who has, however, drawn freely from Ridgway's unfinished notes which he has left unchanged where present-day concepts have made this possible. There must of necessity have been many alterations necessary as well as a vast amount of original material added and for the finished volume Dr. Friedmann is entitled to the credit.

This part covers the gallinaceous birds of which four endemic families are recognized in addition to that of the Guinea fowls of which a single member has become established in parts of the area covered by the volume. Extralimital forms of the Phasianidae that have become established here are similarly discussed. The full descriptions of all known plumages, the synoptic keys, and the drawings illustrating various characters in each of the genera, together with the bibliographies, make the book, as in former parts, an authoritative work of reference. The illustrations, like those of Part 9, are distributed in place throughout the text instead of collected at the end of the volume. Bold-faced numerals are not used in the index, as they were in parts 1 to 8 to indicate the leading references to generic and specific headings. This sometimes necessitates looking up from one to a dozen different pages to find the right one. The appearance of the printed pages of the index is thus more uniform but there is some loss in serviceability when there are many references to the same names.

The reviewer feels that there are more subspecies of the Ruffed Grouse given recognition than there should be, but in this he realizes that there is room for difference of opinion. Dr. Friedmann and Dr. Aldrich made an earlier study of this species (*Condor*, 45: 85–103, 1943) and the present arrangement is in accordance with this previous one with which not all workers on the difficult group have been able to agree.

I believe that an omission has been made in the general discussion of the Phasianidae (pp. 232–234) where no "subgroup" has been provided for the true pheasants, although in the key to the genera of the family there is mention of "PHASIANI" which may be the missing subgroup. Also, the use of the subfamily ending, "INAE," for the lesser group, "GALLINAE," may be misleading. It may be questioned whether the introduced *Phasianus* is entitled to a trinomial in view of its very mixed composition.

Dr. Friedmann has determined the existence of a separable form of the Wild Turkey in western México, from northern Jalisco to Durango, for which he adopts the name *Meleagris gallopavo mexicana* Gould. The reviewer suspected the distinction of this form some time ago as he briefly indicated in a popular publication (*Field Mus. Nat. Hist., Zool. Leaflet*, no. 6: 6, 1924) without giving any detailed evidence. He is pleased that Dr. Friedmann has independently reached a similar conclusion.

¹ RIDGWAY, ROBERT, AND FRIEDMANN, HERBERT. 'The Birds of North and Middle America. Part X.' U. S. Nat. Mus. Bull. 50, pt. 9: I–XII, 1–484, figs. 1–28, 1946. Price, \$1.25.

The synonymy of the family "Cracidae" produces evidence that the name of the family may have to be changed to Penelopeidae! The oldest recognition of the family as a distinct group appears to have been by Vieillot in 1816 in a reference in which only the genus *Penelope* was mentioned by name. The next usage, by Bonaparte in 1831, called the group "Penelopidae" (which included several other families now kept distinct) and the following by Nitzsch in 1840, also "Penelopidae." Cracidae was not used until 1898 when Gadow appears to have proposed it. Any one of the first three references would fix *Penelope* as the type genus of the family and the correct spelling of the family name to be derived from the generic name is Penelopeidae (*cf.* Opinion 140 of the International Commission of Zoological Nomenclature). Dr. Friedmann has produced the evidence although he did not suggest the problem, with which he may be in disagreement.

In any work of the extent of this bulletin, it is possible for a reviewer to select particular points and present opposing views. The foregoing comments are partly of this nature and are not criticisms so much as differences of opinion. They represent a very small part of the text. A vast quantity of extremely useful data is presented on which future investigations can be based, beginning where Dr. Friedmann has stopped. There is no other source where so much basic material is presented on the groups in question in the region treated. The volume will, therefore, take its rightful place on the bookshelf of the working ornithologist where it is certain to be consulted at frequent intervals.—J. T. ZIMMER.

The European Goldfinch in religious art.¹—Although the present work is not strictly ornithological, it has an ornithological background that warrants its mention here. That the European Goldfinch had an important place in religious art in Europe in past centuries is clearly demonstrated in this careful study of the subject. Friedmann has studied 486 paintings of this nature, in the original or in reproduction, which show this bird occupying a prominent place of symbolic significance. The book is concerned with the analysis of this significance and a discussion of the various methods of presentation by various artists and schools. The origins of the ascribed symbolism, in part shared by other birds, in part restrictive, and underlying beliefs concerning various magic powers believed to be possessed by certain species of birds are discussed in considerable detail and should interest many persons who may not care to delve into the artistic side of the matter.

The illustrations are half-tone reproductions of many of the paintings in question or of parts of them. The volume is adequately documented and indexed and contains a list of the various works of art discussed with their repositories as far as known or references to published reproductions. The work gives evidence of a great deal of careful study and 'overtime' labor and should form a valuable reference work for future students of the subject.—J. T. ZIMMER.

Audubon originals.²—This attractive little booklet is interesting from several points of view. The New York Historical Society is the fortunate owner of the original Audubon paintings of North American birds and these, as has been recognized, are not always identical in all respects with the published plates of his elephant folio. Backgrounds were sometimes added by the engraver (on direction from Audubon)

¹ FRIEDMANN, HERBERT. 'The symbolic Goldfinch. Its history and significance in European devotional art.' Supperroyal 8vo, pp. XXIX [+ 3] + 254, 79 pls. (157 figs.), The Bollinger Series VII, 1946. Pantheon Books, Inc., N. Y. \$7.50.

² SHELLEY, DONALD A. Hastings House Americana. 'Audubon birds from the original water colors in the New York Historical Society.' Crown 8vo, pp. 1-40, 24 figs. (16 full p. col.), 1946. Hastings House, N. Y. \$1.00.

and, in any case, the technique of hand-coloring copper engravings produced somewhat different effects than those of the original water colors. It is interesting, therefore, to have some of the originals here reproduced by offset lithography with results comparable to the originals. In addition, three of the colored illustrations and one of the uncolored figures are of heretofore unpublished drawings, not in the folio—Black-throated Green Warbler, Robin, Long-billed Marsh Wren, and a hybrid duck, respectively.

Mr. Shelley has selected extracts from Audubon's 'Ornithological Biography' relating to the subjects of the colored illustrations, and added other explanatory notes, including a sketch of the artist's life. Vignettes include, among other things, two portraits of Audubon and his signature and seal. Those interested in Audubon will find in this publication something not available elsewhere.—J. T. ZIMMER.

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NOTES AND NEWS

THE SIXTY-FIFTH ANNUAL MEETING—A CORRECTION

Owing to unforeseen circumstances, the dates for this meeting at Toronto have been changed to September 8 to 12, 1947. Open sessions for the reading of papers, therefore, will be September 9, 10, and 11.

The Editor greatly regrets that an article in the January issue (pp. 15-35), entitled 'Variations in the bird population of the north-central states due to climatic and other changes,' by Dr. Edwin Lincoln Moseley, is a virtual duplicate of a paper published a few days earlier by the same author in the Ohio Journal of Science, 46: 308-322, "Nov., 1946" = Jan. 11, 1947. Needless to say it would not have been accepted for The Auk if the Editor had been aware that it had been submitted to, or accepted by, another journal. Sincere apologies are due to other authors whose contributions have been delayed in appearance by this unfortunate circumstance.

AUDUBON FIELD NOTES

The National Audubon Society announces that 'Audubon Field Notes,' formerly published as a supplement to 'Audubon Magazine,' is now being issued as a separate journal with a subscription price of two dollars per year. The projected schedule of issue is as follows (subject to change):

January.....	Fall Migration	July.....	Spring Migration
March.....	Christmas Count	September....	Nesting Season
May.....	Winter Season	November....	Breeding Bird Census

HANDWRITING OF ORNITHOLOGISTS

After organization of a collection of samples of the handwriting of ornithologists, great many duplicates remain. These are not mere rejects but constitute a valuable