

Correspondence.

The Individuality of Eggs.

In the July BULLETIN Mr. D. A. Cohen tells of the individuality of the Oregon Towhee as observed by him, peculiar characteristics in eggs of particular pairs reappearing from season to season, and states: "I can never think otherwise than that Major Bendire was correct in asserting that eggs of individual birds in consecutive sets bear marked resemblance to each other."

I am inclined to believe Mr. Cohen in error in crediting the theory of individuality to the lamented Major Bendire. That learned Oologist was, in fact, somewhat skeptical when the writer first published a paper in *The Nidologist* on this interesting subject, taking for example the nidification of the Golden Eagle as observed in the case of particular pairs consecutively for a number of years.

Mr. William Steinbeck of Hollister, Cal., has assured me that his extensive experience in collecting sets of eggs of the Golden Eagle in San Benito county fully bears out the assertion of the theory of individuality. Mr. A. M. Ingersoll informs me that he has collected eggs from a certain Golden Eagle's nest near San Diego for five years past, and in each instance one egg of the set was almost immaculate. In contravention of the theory which these instances support, Major Bendire stated of this eagle in "Life Histories" (Vol. I): "As these birds are usually seen only in pairs at all times of the year, I am inclined to believe they remain mated for life, notwithstanding the fact that the eggs differ very greatly in markings from year to year, although coming from the same nest and evidently from the same pair of birds."

H. R. TAYLOR, Alameda, Cal.

A PROTEST.

In the *Auk* V, Apr., 1888, p. 168, Mr. J. Amory Jeffries describes *Trochilus violajugulum*, taken April 5, 1883 at Santa Barbara, Cal. The type has remained unique until this day and it is now high time, I think, to enter a protest against retaining this name upon the Checklist of North American Birds. With the numerous collectors and active work that has been done in California since that date, it is hardly necessary to point out that if this was a valid species other individuals would have been secured long ere now. Whether this bird is a hybrid or not is immaterial, as it surely deserves no better place among the North American birds than Townsend's Bunting, Lawrence's, Cinnamati, Brewster's or Carbonated Warblers, Cuvier's Kinglet, etc. This form has stood upon the Checklist long enough to be repudiated and its geographical distribution restricted to the "hypothetical list," which is its undoubted place of residence, and it is to be sincerely hoped that when the Cooper Club issues its list of California birds that this will be placed upon such a list of the Club's *resume* of the avi-fauna of the state.

Along with the above species it would also be well for members of Committee on the

State List to inquire into the claim of *Porzana coturniculus* (Ridgway) [Amer. Nat. VII, Feb. 1874, p. 111 and Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus. XIII, 1890, pp. 309-311] has to a place among the birds of California. The recent extensive collecting on the Farallones has demonstrated its absence from the islands. Was not the type specimen erroneously labeled by Mr. T. C. Martin, who presented it to the U. S. National Museum? At any rate this matter will also stand some further investigation. If it proves to be a straggler from the Galapagos as suggested by Mr. Ridgway, well and good, but if not, and the type remains unique, then it deserves a similar fate to *Trochilus violajugulum*.

Two minor notes on the 2nd edition of the Checklist which have come under my notice may interest members of the Club. In the ninth supplement to the Checklist, *Auk* XVI, Jan., 1899, p. 111, a new hummingbird, *Atthis morcomi* RIDGWAY, is added to the list. The A. O. U. Committee fails to insert the generic reference before it, hence we have on p. 176 the specific but no generic reference. I have not access to the original literature, but Ridgway¹ and Elliott² both give it the same. Hence should we not insert the following on p. 176 before No. 435:—

Genus *Atthis* RIECHENBACH.

Atthis, Reich. Aufz. der Colib., 1853, 12.
Type, *Ornysmia heloisia*, Less and DeLatr.

Under *Æstreolata scalaris* BREWSTER, p. 34, the reference should read:—*Auk* III, July 1886, 390 (not 300).

ROBERT BAIRD McLAIN, Wheeling, W. Va.

1. Hummingbirds, Rept. Nat. Mus. 1890 (1892) p. 380.
2. Class and Syn. Trochil, 1879, p. 113.

Book Reviews.

WATER BIRDS OF THE PACIFIC DISTRICT.—By Lyman Belding, April, 1886, pp. 246. Manuscript type-written copy. (Received by the Cooper Ornithological Club March 4, 1897).

This volume was prepared by Mr. Belding for the Division of Economic Ornithology and Mammalogy of the United States Department of Agriculture, now the Biological Survey. The book was intended to serve as a companion volume to *Land Birds of the Pacific District* and had it been printed ten years ago, would have been of the greatest service to workers along our coast. Mr. Belding has generously presented his bound manuscript to the Cooper Club. In the preface written especially to the Club, Mr. Belding says:

"The notes on water birds which I received from the observers of the district are still incorporated in this volume, except a few of Mr. Emerson's, which came too late for insertion.

"The reversing of the Check List of the A. O. U. whereby the water birds came first in the list, instead of last, as formerly, found me unprepared to give the time to the water birds that I needed, and supposing that the water birds would soon be needed for publication, I made a hurried compilation, finished it in five or six weeks and this is the result."

Water Birds contains remarks on 156 species, compiled largely from published works of Baird, Ridgway, Cooper, Suckley, Heermann,

C. H. Townsend, Evermann, Henshaw and Bendire. These are supplemented by original notes supplied by various observers of the Pacific District, including about the same men as furnished notes for the *Land Birds*. The habitat of each species is given under the trivial and scientific names, followed by notes on distribution, migration, feeding, nesting and general habits. The notes on most species are very copious, covering in many cases three and four pages. Each statement is preceded by the name of the author, thus following the plan which was found so satisfactory in the previous volume. The work is especially valuable to us on account of the exact records made for California species, of which notes Mr. Belding has supplied a large portion from his own observations. In spite of its being thirteen years old the book would furnish us with a good basis for our proposed State List.

Mr. Belding's own extensive and long continued observations on this coast have particularly fitted him for the preparation of this much-needed paper and we regret that it has not been made available for general use, as it is by far the best thing of its kind which has been done for the state. Some would perhaps object that the quotations are too lengthy, but I believe this to be one of its virtues, too often lacking in scientific works of a similar nature.

R. C. M.

In a letter received from Dawson City under date of Aug. 2, Mr. Wilfred H. Osgood of the Biological Survey expedition writes of the good health and good work of the party to date. Among others the eggs of the Varied Thrush had been taken.

Official Minutes of Northern Division.

Regular bi-monthly meeting held at Haywards, Cal., with W. Otto Emerson presiding. W. H. Kobbe of Ft. Mason, San Francisco, was elected to active membership. Bills amounting to \$3.73 for current expenses were allowed the secretary. The names of Cloud Rutter of Stanford University and Lawrence Kessing of Alameda were proposed for active membership. Votes of thanks were tendered the Buffalo Society of Natural Sciences, G. Frean Morcom, H. R. Taylor, R. H. Beck and H. W. Carriger for donations to the club. A half-tone of the adopted club crest was ordered made at once. A petition to change the present name of the BULLETIN to that of "The Condor" was introduced in writing, unanimously passed, and referred to the Southern Division for action. If adopted, this change will take effect with the January issue. Mr. Barlow read a letter from W. H. Osgood, dated Dawson City. Papers were read as follows: "A Northern Record for the Black-chinned Sparrow," by D. A. Cohen; "A Night at Sea," by A. W. Anthony; "Lassoing a California Vulture," by F. Stephens, and "Nesting of *Parus rufescens* in Washington," by W. H. Kobbe. Adjourned to meet Nov. 4.

C. BARLOW, Division Secretary.

Official Minutes of Southern Division.

The August meeting of the Southern Division was held Aug. 30 at 403 Bradbury Block, Los Angeles, Pres. McCormick presiding. Seven members were present. The following members were dropped from the roll for non-payment of dues: Roy B. Blackman, R. L. Garnier, F. B. Jewett, Bert Robbins, B. H. Swales, L. P. Williams and Otto J. Zahn. The name of H. H. Dunn of Fullerton was proposed for active membership by Mr. Daggett. Messrs. Swarth and Robertson were appointed a committee to arrange for the October outing meeting. Mr. Daggett gave an interesting account of his trip to Mt. Whitney and read extracts from a letter recently received from Jos. Grinnell, now at Cape Nome, Alaska. The following papers were read: "The Flycatchers of Arizona," (embracing the Sulphur-bellied, Olivaceous and Buff-breasted) by O. W. Howard; "Notes on the Gray-crowned Leucosticte in the Vicinity of Mt. Whitney," by F. S. Daggett, and two papers from the Northern Division.

HOWARD ROBERTSON,
Division Secretary.

Publications Received.

- Bird Lore*, I, No. 4, Aug., 1899.
Bulletin of the Buffalo Society of Nat. Sciences, Vols. II, III, IV, V complete and Vol. VI, No. 1.
Bulletin of the Dept. of Agriculture, Nos. 2, 4 and 5, (to complete files).
Bulletin Michigan Ornithological Club, III, No. 2, April, 1899.
Giornale Ornitologico Italiano, III, No. 15—16, Mch.,—April, 1899.
Journal of the Maine Ornithological Society, I, No. 3, July, 1899.
Maine Sportsman, VI, Nos. 71 and 72, July and August, 1899.
Museum, V, Nos. 9 and 10, July and August, 1899.
North American Fauna, Nos. 11 and 12, (to complete files.)
North American Fauna, No. 15, Aug. 8, 1899.
Oologist, XVI, Nos. 6, 7 and 8, June, July and August, 1899.
Ornithologisches Jahrbuch, X, Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 4, Jan.—Aug., 1899.
Osprey, III, No. 10, June, 1899.
Plant World, II, Nos. 10 and 11, July and August, 1899.
Recreation, XI, No. 2, August, 1899.
Sports Afield, XXIII, Nos. 1, 2 and 3, July, August and September, 1899.
Wilson Bulletin, No. 27, July, 1899.

The expedition sent to the Galapagos Islands by Hon. Timothy Hopkins in the interests of the Stanford University has returned after a ten months' collecting trip, bringing much valuable material in all branches of science, including several new species of birds from formerly unvisited islands. Edmund Heller M. C. O. C. and R. F. Snodgrass, both of Stanford University, were in charge of the expedition.