

GENERAL NEWS NOTES.

C. W. RANDALL, JR., of Oakland, is spending the summer months at Cisco, Cal.

WALTER B. SAMPSON of Stockton, Cal., reports a set of Fulvous Tree Duck 1-24, taken in Merced Co., in June.

LYMAN BELDING spent several days in June at Summit, one of his favorite old-time observation grounds in the Sierras.

WALTER K. FISHER has been engaged in collecting for the Biological Survey near Baird, Shasta Co., Cal., for several weeks past.

COOPER CLUB members were represented at the commencement exercises at Stanford University in June as follows: The degree of A. M. was conferred upon Joseph Grinnell and J. F. Illingworth and that of A. B. upon Walter K. Fisher, Edmund Heller and Robert E. Snodgrass.

LOREN E. TAYLOR of Fyffe, El Dorado Co., Cal. has received an appointment as forest ranger on the Lake Tahoe Forest Reservation. Mr. Taylor's intimate knowledge of forestry and natural history will render his ranger work the more effective, while the opportunity afforded him of studying the fauna of the higher Sierras will doubtless be improved.

PROF. F. E. L. BEAL of the Biological Survey has been in California since early in June, visiting the principal orchard districts for the purpose of collecting stomachs of various birds, which will be analyzed and which will furnish the basis for further reports on the food habits of our birds. W. Otto Emerson of Haywards accompanied Prof. Beal through the region about San Francisco Bay.

PROF. J. O. SNYDER of Stanford University, one of the Cooper Club's popular members, was married on June 2nd to Miss Francis Hamilton, the couple departing at once on an eastern tour to include the Buffalo Exposition and Prof. Snyder's home in Indiana. Prof. Snyder has been connected with the University faculty for eight years and has been closely associated with Dr. Jordan in his work of classifying fishes. Cooper Club members unite in extending cordial well wishes to Mr. Snyder and his bride.

ON June 20th the Beck Expedition returned from a seven-months' cruise in the Galapagos Archipelago with a considerable cargo of scientific specimens. R. H. Beck and Ernest Adams were the naturalists in charge and about 1,000 birds' skins and a representative collection of exotic birds' eggs were taken, the latter embracing many species not heretofore discovered. Stops were made at Clarion and Guadalupe Islands and an extensive collection of photographs was secured. A number of giant tortoises were taken and are at present being kept at Mr. Beck's home at Berryessa. The expedition reports many interesting sights, including the eruption of several volcanoes.

THROUGH press dispatches the ornithological world became aware of the extremely sad and violent death which came to Francis J. Birtwell at Albuquerque, N. M., on June 29th. A dispatch conveys the particulars of Mr. Birtwell's demise as follows: "The couple were married in the Highlands only five weeks ago, and from here they journeyed to the Pecos country on their wedding tour. Last Friday morning Mr. Birtwell ascended a lofty pine tree to procure a bird's nest and while at a distance of seventy-five feet from the ground a heavy wind began swaying the tree. He called to his wife for aid and soon after ropes were thrown to him. He placed a loop beneath his armpits and the men at the other end of the rope began lowering the human weight. When Birtwell was within thirty feet of the ground the knotted rope lodged in the forks of the tree and in some unaccountable manner the rope slipped from under one arm and the hemp fastened about the throat of the unfortunate man. Mr. Birtwell struggled for several minutes to free himself from his precarious position and the men on the ground put forth every effort to release him, but all in vain. Finally, the struggling ceased and then it was first discovered that the man was dead. An hour after the body was lowered to the ground and an inquest was held."

Mr. Birtwell was well and favorably known to ornithologists as a writer on the birds of New Mexico and had in view at the time of his death an elaborate work to be entitled "The Ornithology of New Mexico." His writings in *The Osprey* during Mr. Coues regime, on Aptosochromatism received considerable attention at the hands of ornithologists, many dissenting from the theory in favor of molt, while Dr. Coues expressed to a greater or less degree his belief in aptosochromatism. Mr. Birtwell was a brilliant and promising ornithologist and general regret is felt that such a career should have been so abruptly closed.