

bition. Beings who love and mate, who build homes with infinite labor and pains, with marvelous wisdom and skill, these are hunted, robbed and killed, without any consideration of their rights.

If these beings, wearing feathers, were anything but innocent, beautiful, useful, wonderfully gifted with intelligence and the power of flight; if they were injurious, enemies and not friends of that conceited being, man, he might be justified perhaps in taking no account of their rights to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

And it would seem that the representative ornithologist ought to have some regard for their rights, and a degree of sympathy with birds as living beings. But to paraphrase a very bad popular saying concerning Indians, they seem to consider that *the only good bird is a dead bird*.

In the September-October number of the CONDOR, there is an interesting and excellently written article on the rufous-crowned sparrow, the description of a social colony on a little hillside opposite a schoolhouse, where the birds obtained a part of their living no doubt from the scraps remaining of the childrens' lunches. If the teacher was up to date she taught the children to be lovers and protectors of these "feathered friends." But the ornithologist went across the road, and "eighteen specimens were taken within an area of two or three acres."

The writers handle their English deftly. They never say killed, slaughtered or murdered but "taken" or some such gentle word. For example, on a succeeding visit to the same field, after finding a nest, the mother bird appeared, "but was extremely wary. She flew past the bush and alighted but would not go to the nest. Then she flew up the hill again when I collected her."

Now I should like to say seriously, why one dozen birds should not have been sufficient, leaving six at least to enjoy life; also why the bright little mother should have been "collected" merely for dissection to show that her nest of eggs was complete.

And the writer is "looking forward to further investigation of this sage brush home with renewed interest."

Among general news notes, we observed that Messrs. — and — have returned from an extended trip with "a host of interesting and valuable material"—a soft name for dead birds.

In pleasing contrast, to me at least, with these polite allusions to destructive bird study, is the beautiful article of a lady in Berkeley, on the Black-headed Grosbeak. Here is the sympathetic study of a living sentiment being with a voice of harmony: a life and a voice to

be loved and described without the "collection" of its owner.

I believe in the motto of *Bird-Love*, albeit the editor was once a collector himself:

*"A bird in the bush is worth two in the hand."*

I hope no one will be offended by my plain speaking. It seems to me that the time has come to emphasize more the study of the living and less the study of the dead. Young people are taking notes of us, and if very many of them get the impression that ornithology means merely the collection of eggs, nests and skins, it will be a sorry time for the birds.

The better trend of thought I believe, is toward a kind regard for, and sympathetic interest in the native citizens of the earth and air.

Yours truly,

GARRETT NEWKIRK.

Pasadena.

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## PUBLICATIONS REVIEWED.

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### BREWSTER ON LOWER CALIFORNIA BIRDS\*—

This paper of nearly 250 pages is much more than the unpretentious title would indicate. We are accustomed to see mere nominal lists of species bearing such titles as that of Mr. Brewster's paper. But his is something out of the ordinary. The reader fails to properly realize its scope until he has perused its many pages and studied some one of the monographs which the accounts of several species actually are. Mr. Brewster's paper is in reality a compendium of all that is known of the 255 species found in the region dealt with.

The paper is based primarily on the collections made by Mr. M. Abbott Frazar who spent nine months in Lower California in 1887 in Mr. Brewster's interests. The collection numbered 4,400 birds which have already afforded several novelties as well as series of certain species previously known only from one or two specimens. Mr. Frazar also kept field-notes to some extent, and these, with extended critical remarks on specimens, constitute the new material offered in the present paper. Four new forms are described as new, namely, *Totanus melanoleucus frazari*, *Megascops xantusi*, *Bubo virginianus elachistus* and *Tachycineta thalassina brachyptera*. These are all confined so far as known to southern Lower California. Thirty-six species are newly accredited to the region.

A useful feature of the paper is a carefully compiled Bibliography, and synonymies are entered complete for each of the birds peculiar to

\*Birds of the Cape Region of Lower California. By William Brewster. —Bull. Mus. Co np. Zool. XVI, September 1902, pp 1—242, with one map.

the region. These were prepared by Mr. Walter Deane, Mr. Brewster's Assistant, and give evidence of much pains-taking labor, which only those who have attempted similar work can appreciate.

While evidently exhaustive for the Cape Region of Lower California, and meant to cover that region chiefly, the accounts of many species cover the whole peninsula and often extend to include the entire coast. Thus important remarks are made in regard to a number of birds in Southern California and the State generally. *Dendroica aestiva sonorana* is for the first time attributed to California on the basis of a skin in Mr. Brewster's collection taken by Stephens at Riverside, Sept. 14, 1881. This race of the yellow warbler may therefore be expected as a spring visitant to the extreme southwest corner of the State.

We of the Pacific Coast are grateful to Mr. Brewster for the present comprehensive review of the birds of the Cape Region. It is very convenient to have at hand a paper of the present character to which one may turn for the latest information on the region, knowing it to be authoritative as well. One not familiar with the scattered local literature might flounder about for hours for some fact in the distribution or life history of a southern species, when a moment's reference to such a paper as this would settle the point so far as known. We can only wish for more works of a similar nature for the different areas of the West.—J. G.

CHAPMAN ON ALASKAN BIRDS\*—Mr. Chapman reports on a collection of birds received from the Kenai Peninsula and vicinity, giving a list of sixty-eight species with notes by the field collector. The westward extension of the known ranges of *Dendroica townsendi*, *Spinus pinus* and *Empidonax traillii* is of particular note. Mr. Chapman adds critical notes of general interest on several species. The nomenclature of the *Parus hudsonicus* group of forms receives another shuffle, the third within a few years. *Lagopus leucurus peninsularis* is described as new, and at the same time the Rocky Mountain race (*altipetens*) is lumped with *Lagopus leucurus* proper. This is simply reversing the case as worked out by Osgood two years ago. Also a form of the Steller jay which he names *Cyanocitta stelleri borealis* is described from the Kenai Peninsula. It is "intermediate in color between the Queen Charlotte Island bird and that inhabiting the (adjacent) coast," though geographically removed from the former. Judging from the description

the distinguishing characters are as slight as have been so far adduced by any author to constitute a nameable form. We believe that all discernible geographical races occupying definite areas should be supplied with a name, even though they be recklessly diagnosed as "not worth the naming" by many specimen-labellers and popular writers. Evidently from the present paper and other scientific articles by the same author Mr. Chapman believes so too. But the Audubonist who reads only "Bird-Lore" would not think so after perusing the various editorials and reviews in that magazine.—J. G.

SNODGRASS AND HELLER ON BIRDS OF CLIPPERTON AND COCOS ISLANDS.\*—The present paper opens with a description of the physiographic features of Clipperton and Cocos Islands, the former having "the distinction of being the only coral island in the eastern Pacific.

Under the Systematic Account of Birds are listed fifteen species, five of which are land forms: *Coccyzus ferrugineus*, *Nesotriccus ridgwayi*, *Cocornis agassizi*, *Dendroica aureola* from Cocos, and *Chelidon erythrogater?* from Clipperton. The greater part of the paper consists of technical descriptions of the species. The measurements given of *Gygis candida* (= *G. alba* Sparrm.) would indicate the form called *Gygis alba kittlitzii*, by Hartert (Caroline Is.). *Micranous diamesus*, discovered by the expedition, is intermediate between *M. leucocapillus* and *M. hawaiiensis*. A comparison of the type of *diamesus* with several fully adult specimens of *hawaiiensis* from Laysan Id. shows that the color differences can not be depended upon inasmuch as the color of *hawaiiensis* is variable, a specimen matching quite satisfactorily the type of *diamesus*. Furthermore the bill of the fully adult *hawaiiensis* specimens are the same length as that of the type of *diamesus*. The species must rest then on the slightly longer wing, tail, and middle toe, and stouter bill. *Sula nesiotis* from Clipperton is a species similar to *Sula brewsteri*, somewhat larger with the brownish color of the head and upper parts considerably paler. The measurements of *Cocornis agassizi* are unfortunately listed as of "*C. ridgwayi*."

The expedition so successfully carried on in 1898-99 by Mr. Snodgrass and Mr. Heller added to the region under consideration *Micranous diamesus* and *Sula nesiotis*, both new. The present paper is certainly an important addition to our knowledge of the ornithology of Cocos and Clipperton Islands.—W. K. F.

\*List of Birds Collected in Alaska by the Andrew J. Stone Expedition of 1901. By Frank M. Chapman.—Bulletin Am. Mus. Nat. Hist. XVI, Aug. 18, 1902, pp. 231-247.

\*Papers from the Hopkins Stanford Galapagos Expedition, 1898-1899. XI. The Birds of Clipperton and Cocos Islands. By Robert Evans Snodgrass and Edmund Heller.—Proc. Washington Acad. Sc. IV, pp. 501-520. Sept. 30, 1902.