

lieve is the happy device whereby the little birds will still be protected "from all their human foes," and the law will not be un-American, "nor in any way trammel" our "dearly cherished ornithological freedom." That many of the leading ornithologists of the country (who are presumably among the "better-balanced") do object to the bond feature we can amply prove, if evidence is desired.

In conclusion we might add that we sincerely regret that our critic has twisted and so entirely misconstrued our (to the western mind) really mild editorial. Still with the friendliest intentions in the world we cannot help hoping that the next time he goes gunning for heretical Western editors, his efforts may be crowned with better success.—WALTER K. FISHER.]

On the 'Bonding Clause' of the A. O. U. Model Law

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CONDOR:

In the last CONDOR I note with approval some editorial objections to the bonding feature of the A. O. U. bird law. The utility and necessity of a license system in laws for bird protection are self-evident. But it appears to me that when the issuance of a license is properly safeguarded and its misuse by the holder is attended by permanent forfeiture and, if necessary, similar penalties to those inflicted for the breaking of game laws all reasonable requirements have been fully met.

The necessity of securing a bond is objectionable from several points of view. In many cases it will work hardship even to the point of preventing the accomplishment of valuable ornithological work. This will be brought about by the delays incident to securing a bond by a stranger, especially where it will be desirable to work say for a week or two in a state and one's time is limited. Or in the case of an ornithologist who would desire to work in several states during the same season. In such a case as that just mentioned, if a recent instance that has come to my knowledge is any criterion, the ornithologist would find it practically impossible to accomplish any work by the delays in securing the necessary bonds. In addition to this is the annoyance of having to ask friends to go upon one's bond, for bonding companies are expensive and not always available. If the laws for bird protection are aimed at those who destroy birds wantonly or for purposes of gain and not at field ornithologists then the bonding clause in the regulations governing the issuance of licenses to properly accredited ornithological students should be cut out.

E. W. NELSON.

THE EDITOR'S BOOK SHELF

A NEW PROCELSTERNA FROM THE LEEWARD ISLANDS, HAWAIIAN GROUP. By WALTER K. FISHER. From Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus. XXVI, pp. 559-693, Jan. 29, 1903.

In this paper a new tern of the genus *Procelsterna* is described. The birds were discovered, by the *Albatross* Hawaiian Expedition, on Necker Island, to the westward of the main Hawaiian Group. So far as known this tern inhabits only Necker, French Frigate Shoal, and Bird Id. Singularly it is most nearly related to *Procelsterna cinerea* of Australian waters, and not to *cerulea* of central Polynesia. The eggs, downy chick, and juvenal plumage are also described.

BIRDS OF LAYSAN AND THE LEEWARD ISLANDS, HAWAIIAN GROUP. By WALTER K. FISHER. Extracted from U. S. Fish Com. Bull. 1903; pp. 1-39 plates 1-10.

In this readable as well as thoroughly scientific paper we find the ornithological results of the *Albatross* Hawaiian explorations in 1902. The recentness of the observations adds an element of freshness to the unusual accuracy and vividness of the descriptions; and thus we are given by far the most valuable account which has yet appeared of "the greatest bird island in the world." Then too the fifty-two half-tones are fine examples of successful bird-photography, though we are disappointed that these could not have been reproduced at least in original size instead of reduced. One is perhaps most struck by the wonderful fearlessness displayed by the individuals of nearly every species presented in the mammoth bird community. We can only share with the author the fear of the deplorable consequences which would follow the introduction of some predaceous animal such as the cat. For Laysan Island is small, only three miles long, and easily accessible over the entire surface. The unparalleled opportunity afforded for study of the habits and life-histories of the various sea-fowl can be appreciated only after reading Mr. Fisher's faithful portrayal of his week's visit with the birds of Laysan.

NOTES ON THE BIRDS PECULIAR TO LAYSAN ISLAND, HAWAIIAN GROUP. By WALTER K. FISHER. From 'The Auk' XX, pp. 384-397, plates XII-XVI, Oct. 1903.

The author discusses the habits of the land birds of Laysan Island, and to some extent their relationships. This paper is an amplification of certain notes published in 'Birds of Laysan, etc.,' with the addition of several photographs not appearing in that paper. The reproductions are much better, and demonstrate the mistake made by the publishers of the 'Birds of Laysan' in attempting a cheap means of reproducing an exceptionally valuable set of pictures.

It is indeed singular that such a small island as Laysan should possess three land birds besides a rail and a duck, all peculiar.—JOSEPH GRINNELL.

BIRDS OF THE SISKIYOU MOUNTAINS, CALIFORNIA: A PROBLEM IN DISTRIBUTION. BY MALCOLM P. ANDERSON AND JOSEPH GRINNELL. Proc. Acad. Nat. Sciences, Philad., pp. 4-15, Apr. 17, 1903.

The Siskiyou mountains in northern California are interesting faunally because they are a wedge between the more or less 'arid' Sierras on the east and the excessively moist coast belt on the west. The first portion of the paper concerns itself with the physiography of the region, and a list of the principal forest trees is given, all of which are characteristic Sierran forms. The only peculiar tree to this range, *Picea breweriana*, seems to have been overlooked. The Transition, Canadian, and Hudsonian Zones are represented.

As would be expected *a priori*, the avifauna proves to be a mixture of the Humid Coast Fauna and the Arid Sierran, and the "list is a remarkable one as showing the association of a number of birds not unusually found together." Forty-three species are listed. *Vireo huttoni obscurus* is found to be untenable.

A LIST OF LAND BIRDS FROM CENTRAL WASHINGTON. BY ROBERT E. SNODGRASS. From 'The Auk,' XX, pp. 202-209, April, 1903.

During the summer of 1902 Mr. Snodgrass conducted a biological collecting expedition to the interesting Grand Coulee country of Central Washington, and the ornithological results are embodied in the present paper. The Grand Coulee is the bed of an ancient and temporary short-cut for the Columbia river around the eastern face of the old glaciers which flowed southward and eastward from the mountains. It is a gorge fifty miles long, and from one to two miles wide cut down three hundred to five hundred feet into the basalt. The country in this region is for the most part very desolate, being given over to the cultivation of wheat, and "there is nothing left of Nature but the air and the dust of the road." Fifty-two species of land birds were listed, with brief annotations.

ON THE TERRESTRIAL VERTEBRATES OF PORTIONS OF SOUTHERN NEW MEXICO AND WESTERN TEXAS. BY WITMER STONE and JAMES A. G. REHN. Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Philad. pp. 16-33, May 7, 1903.

Mr. Stone has given us a list of forty-one species of birds secured by Messrs. Rehn and Viereck in the Sacramento Mountain region of south central New Mexico, and the extreme western portion of Texas. Specimens of thirty-one of the species were taken, the other ten being admitted on field identification. The range of *Spizella atrigularis* is extended eastward by the capture of a specimen at Dry Canyon, Otero Co., N. M.

DESCRIPTIONS OF NEW GENERA SPECIES AND SUBSPECIES OF AMERICAN BIRDS. BY ROBERT RIDGWAY. Proc. Biol. Soc. Washington, XVI, 105-112, Sept. 30, 1903-

In this paper Mr. Ridgway publishes diagnoses of four new genera of swallows, and twenty new species and subspecies of North and Middle American birds. These new forms are included in Part III of "Birds of North and Middle America," "now mostly in print, the further printing and publication of which has been postponed until after June, 1904." Of interest to western bird students is *Budytes flavus alascensis* from Western Alaska; *Lanius ludovicianus mearnsi*, from San Clemente Island, Cal., and Santa Margarita Island, Lower California; *Baeolophus inornatus restrictus*, "vicinity of San Francisco Bay, Cal.,"; *Baeolophus inornatus murinus*, Southern California and northern Lower California; *Psaltriparus minimus saturatus*, "vicinity of Puget Sound"; *Chamaea fasciata rufula*, "central coast district of California, in Marin, San Francisco and Santa Clara counties." Part III of Mr. Ridgway's great work will contain much of especial value to Californians and we greatly regret the unlooked for delay in its appearance. The cause, needless to say, is due to circumstances over which the author has no control.

THE NORTH AMERICAN FORMS OF ASTRAGALINUS PSALTRIA (SAY), BY HARRY C. OBERHOLSER. Proc. Biol. Soc. Washington XVI, 113-116, Sept. 30, 1903.

Mr. Oberholser has briefly reviewed the North American forms of *Astragalinus psaltria* of

authors, namely *A. p. psaltria*, *A. p. arizonæ* and *A. p. mexicanus*. He concludes that the last two are the same as *Astragalinus p. psaltria*. *Arizonæ*, from Fort Wingate, N. M. was based on the immature parti-colored plumage of *psaltria*, and *mexicanus* is nothing more than the fully perfected black-backed plumage of the same subspecies. All three of these so-called races have been found breeding together in Colorado. All adult males from Lower California, California, Nevada, Arizona and Utah "have the back olive green, apparently never assuming the black plumage of true *psaltria*." This form is described as *Astragalinus psaltria hesperophilus*, the type being taken from San Bernardino.

BIRDS IN THEIR RELATIONS TO MAN. By CLARENCE M. WEED and NED DEARBORN. 8 VO. 380 pages, and many full-page and text illustrations. T. B. Lippincott Co., Philad. 1903.

This excellent book is, as the title-page states, "A Manual of Economic Ornithology for the United States and Canada." It is written in an entertaining style, and is certainly a very valuable addition to the literature of economic ornithology. As a storehouse of facts for the lay-reader, as well as for the professional ornithologist, it will be warmly welcomed, and its mission of education is one to be highly commended. In such a short notice it is difficult to give an adequate idea of a book of this character, which necessarily deals with many details. We would therefore advise the reader to procure a copy, if he is interested in this important branch of ornithological study.

THE ECONOMIC VALUE OF BIRDS TO THE STATE. By FRANK M. CHAPMAN. State of New York Forest Fish and Game Commission, 4 to, pp. 1-66, 12 colored plates. Sept. 1903.

In this excellent paper Mr. Chapman has presented a treatise on the economic status of the more important land birds of New York state. But from the nature of the subject his remarks have a much wider application, and omitting certain species would apply very well to California. Of necessity much of the paper is compilation, but the author has exercised good judgment in the selection of extracts, and in the choice of his sources.

The paper opens with 'The Bird and the State,' followed by 'What the Bird Does for the State,' under which is considered, 'The Bird and the Forester,' 'The Bird and the Fruit-grower,' 'The Bird and the Farmer,' and 'The Bird and the Citizen.' Then follows 'What the State does for the Bird,' 'What the State Should Do for the Bird,' and 'The Facts in the Case.' The principal families of land birds are taken up in order, and the commoner or more important economic species are considered under each. Copious references are given to original sources, which makes the paper a most handy compendium of economic ornithology.

The twelve colored plates are by Mr. Louis Agassiz Fuertes, and are well reproduced. They represent twenty-four species, of the leading types, from hawks to thrushes. The plate representing the red-tailed and Cooper hawks is particularly fine, both in the pose of the birds and in coloring, and we are also much taken with that of the screech owl, representing the gray and rufous phases of this familiar bird.

NOTES ON THE ANATOMY OF *GEOSPIZA*, *COCORNIS* AND *CERTHIDIA*. By ROBERT E. SNODGRASS. From 'The Auk,' XX, pp. 402-17, plates XVII-XX.

Mr. Snodgrass compares at some length the anatomy of *Geospiza*, *Cocornis* and *Certhidia*. *Certhidia* is usually considered as belonging to the Mniotiltidæ and *Geospiza* and *Cocornis* to the Fringillidæ, but "in all structural points *Cocornis* really resembles *Certhidia* more than it resembles *Geospiza*. To be sure, the adult males of *Cocornis* and most of the *Geospiza* species are almost plain black, while the adults of *Certhidia* are gray with admixtures of olive and brownish. Yet, in the shape of the bill and in the structure of the skull *Certhidia* and *Cocornis* are almost identical. On the other hand, the structural differences between *Cocornis* and *Geospiza* are slight—the slender-billed *Geospizæ* differ from *Cocornis* in the characters of the skull and skeleton of the bill scarcely more than *Cocornis* does from *Certhidia*. The difference is not nearly so great as that between the slender-billed forms of *Geospiza* itself. Hence, a study of these three genera, is suggestive of a possible derivation of *Geopiza* from *Cocornis* and of *Cocornis* from *Certhidia*. This however, would place *Geospiza* in the Mniotiltidæ!"

There is no objection to this, Mr. Snodgrass. Certain learned authorities group together into the family Drepanididæ birds as dissimilar as our redstart and cardinal grosbeak. Verily classification plays some queer pranks!—WALTER K. FISHER.