

THE CONDOR

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of Western Ornithology

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EDITORIAL NOTES AND NEWS

Next thing in value to precise locality in the record of the occurrence of an animal, is the statement of the exact date of the observation. A perusal of some recent bird lists shows evidence of carelessness or laziness on the part of the respective authors not consistent with the scientific tone otherwise assumed. We regret the opportunity to point to a particularly virulent case in the present issue of this magazine, where a rare bird is recorded as secured in "December, 1908." The record would have been of decidedly more use, and would have impressed the reader as having been better considered by the author, if the day of the month had been included.

It may now be announced authoritatively that the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology of the University of California has adopted a commendably broad policy as regards the use of its research collections. Material of any sort—birds, mammals, reptiles—will be loaned to any responsible investigator anywhere, providing, of course, that there be no conflict in interests; that is, if a certain group has already been selected by someone for study, it is not to be expected that the material in question be called in for transference to the later applicant. But the possibility of such trouble is remote. The feature to be emphasized is that the new Museum is not a cold-storage concern, but that it proposes to render its collections of widest possible use. No restrictions are imposed, save that the borrower is expected to

pay transportation charges, and to exercise reasonable care in the proper preservation of the specimens while in his keeping. The National Museum, as well as certain others of the foremost eastern institutions, has consistently pursued this generous policy, certainly without injuring either their standing or, to any material extent, their collections.

We are very glad indeed to receive direct information to the effect that there is to be a new edition of Ridgway's "Nomenclature of Colors" and this right soon. Attention is called to the letter publishd beyond under "Correspondence" in which Mr. Ridgway announces the scope of the work. To the systematic student of almost any group of animals, such a manual is of inestimable value; and we will all have Mr. Ridgway to thank for providing that which we have begun to need so pressingly.

Mr. Malcolm P. Anderson has again gone to the Orient to collect mammals for the British Museum. He is accompanied by an assistant and is now on his way into Central and Western China. His work will ultimately take him into Tibet.

Mr. Harry S. Swarth returned home on October 8 from an absence of over six months' duration occupied in exploring the islands of Alaska between Juneau and Dixon Entrance. His collections of birds and mammals were obtained for the California Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, in which institution Mr. Swarth is Assistant Curator. This material will be worked up by him during the winter, and will form the basis of a special report on the animals of southeastern Alaska.

We wish to forcibly remind subscribers to this magazine that, under the new postal regulations, we are compelled to stop sending out copies as soon as subscriptions have become delinquent. Therefore, if it is wisht to avoid any break in the receipt of THE CONDOR, dues should be paid up promptly.

PUBLICATIONS REVIEWED

BIOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS IN ALASKA AND YUKON TERRITORY. By WILFRED H. OSGOOD. (=North American Fauna No. 30, Washington, October, 1909, pp. 1-96, 2 figs., plates I-V.)

The three separate reports comprising the paper deal with neighboring localities on the upper Yukon River, one in Alaska, the other two in Yukon Territory, Canada. Carefully detailed accounts are given of the physiography and flora of the various regions, while the bulk of the paper is devoted to annotated lists of the mammals and birds met with during the summers of 1903 and 1904. The greatest interest attaches to the accounts of the "big game" of the region, their habits, manner of occurrence, etc., being given in the greatest detail; in fact, more attention is paid to this portion of