

basis. As it is impracticable, if not impossible, for any one man to know and keep in touch with all of the competent observers and contributors in North America, it has seemed best to place this work in the hands of competent leaders in various sections, who are tried and willing to take charge of the work in their particular localities, to endeavor to arouse interest among their acquaintances in collecting information, to secure contributions from competent and reliable observers, and to pass judgment on the accuracy and reliability of whatever they send in for publication. The following well-known western ornithologists are among those who have already generously volunteered to serve in this capacity: Mr. Edw. K. Warren for Colorado; Mr. Aretas A. Saunders for Montana; Mr. Altan Brooks for British Columbia; Mr. S. F. Rathbun for Washington; Mr. Wm. L. Finley for Oregon; and Mr. A. B. Howell for California.

Nearly all of these collaborators have reported more or less success in arousing interest in the work among their correspondents, and considerable material has been sent in and filed away for future use; but in far too many cases the results of their labors have been disappointingly small.

Eighteen life histories have already been written, but as they contain mainly the results of the author's personal observations, together with such quotations from published material as seemed desirable to make them more nearly complete, they are open to additional contributions from others, as well as final revision. Preference will always be given to original contributions; quotations from published literature will be reduced to a minimum and contributors will be given full credit for whatever material they furnish.

Mr. Bent already has in his own field-notes nearly enough material to write the life histories of over half of the species to be included in the next volume, but, even after exhausting all the material contained in the published literature on the subject, there are surprisingly few species regarding which we have sufficient material for even fairly complete life histories. An extensive study of the published material brings to light some interesting facts; a vast amount of data has been published on migration and distribution; nesting habits have been written up more fully than any other phase of the subject, and much has been written about the food of birds, particularly from an economic standpoint; but the exact period of incubation and of the development of the young has been carefully worked out for very few species, the sequence of plumages in the water-birds has been sadly neglected, and comparatively little has been published on winter habits.

For many of the water-birds, only the most meagre life histories could be culled from the published literature on the subject. To collate and compile in an extensive work on this subject all that has been published relating to the life histories of North American birds is an undertaking well worth while; but the value of any work of this kind is greatly en-

hanced by a liberal addition of original material, which was a marked feature of Major Bendire's work.

There are few ornithologists who cannot find the time to study effectively some phases of the life histories of one or more species which are readily accessible. There is much information which is badly needed and which could easily be obtained; much information of value lies buried in the field-notes of nearly every observer; even fragmentary notes are often valuable as contributions to life histories; and it is only by collecting as much of this material as possible that we can hope to get anything even approaching completeness.

All possible information is desired on the following points in the life histories of as many species as are available for study: 1. Extent and dates of spring migration. 2. Date of arrival on breeding grounds. 3. Mating performances. 4. Location of nest. 5. Construction of nest. 6. Number of eggs and date of laying. 7. Period of incubation. 8. Do both sexes incubate? 9. Number of broods in a season, with dates. 10. Food and development of young. 11. Sequence of plumages to maturity. 12. Seasonal moults of adults. 13. Food and feeding habits of adults. 14. Flight; swimming or diving habits. 15. Behavior with relation to other species. 16. Vocal powers and their significance. 17. Extent and dates of fall migration. 18. Winter home and habits.

Californians should correspond with our own state representative, Mr. A. B. Howell, Covina, California.

## COMMUNICATION

### MISINFORMATION

Editor THE CONDOR:

As an instance of crass scientific ignorance I believe that Mr. Wm. D. Boyce, as evidenced in his "Illustrated South America", recently published by Rand, McNally & Co., quite surpasses anything I have seen. He mentions finding in Peru "doves' eggs, which are found deposited in the sand on the banks of the streams. The doves do not 'set' on their eggs, but let the sun hatch them out. The eggs do not have a shell like our birds' eggs, but a tough film like a snake egg." I assure you this is *verbatim*, and written by a man who has travelled extensively and apparently for the purpose of gathering and publishing statistics!

In other places he speaks of the "cow fish" in Peru and of "Potassium iodine" in Chili!

Of course one does not expect all travellers to be infallible; but with so many scientific institutions to refer to it seems an unpardonable carelessness to put on record, in a book supposed to be authentic, such absurdities as the above. It is of but slight use to publish at this late date the correction, and inform the distinguished author that doves do not lay soft-shelled eggs in sand, leaving that to the alligators, turtles and iguanas; or that the "cow fish" is no fish at all but a mammal; or that "Potassium iodine" is as impossible a

compound as "Lime lead", although Potassium iodide is found in Chili! However, you may find space for this, and I trust a copy will find its way into the hands of Mr. Boyce.

Very truly yours,

HENRY B. KAEDING.

February 2, 1913.

## MINUTES OF COOPER CLUB MEETINGS

### SOUTHERN DIVISION

DECEMBER.—The December meeting of the Southern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was held on December 26, 1912, at the Museum of History, Science and Art, Los Angeles, California. On motion duly made and seconded, Mr. Daggett was appointed Temporary Chairman. The following members were present: Messrs. Chambers, Cookman, Daggett, Dickey, Fisher, Hubbs, Lamb, Rich, van Rossem, and Law.

The minutes of the November meeting were read and approved, and the minutes of the Northern Division for December were read. Upon motion by Dr. Rich, seconded by Mr. Lamb and duly carried, the Secretary was instructed to cast the unanimous ballot of those present electing to active membership, Mesdames Eugene Overton, Edwin H. Husler and F. B. Bicknell, and Messrs. W. B. Bell, Frank C. Clarke, Alf Eastgate and Joseph A. Sweeney, these names having been proposed at the last meeting.

Applications for membership were presented as follows: Charles S. Moore, P. O. Box 222, San Diego, Calif., proposed by A. M. Ingersoll; M. B. Rice, Cascadia, Oregon, proposed by W. L. Finley; John McB. Robertson, Buena Park, Orange County, Calif., proposed by F. S. Daggett; O. P. Silliman, Castroville, Calif., proposed by W. Lee Chambers. Upon motion by Mr. Lamb, seconded by Dr. Rich and duly carried, the Southern Division accepted with regret the resignation of Mr. E. W. Gifford.

The meeting then proceeded to the nomination of officers for 1913, with the following result: For President, J. E. Law; for Vice-President, Howard Robertson; for Secretary, A. B. Howell.

The Secretary then read a paper by Mr. Virgil W. Owen entitled "Notes on the Nesting of the Heerman Gull off the Southwest Coast of Mexico." Adjourned.—J. E. LAW, *Secretary*.

JANUARY.—The January meeting of the Southern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was held on January 30, 1913, at the Museum of History, Science and Art, Los Angeles, California. On motion duly made and seconded, Mr. Daggett was appointed Temporary Chairman. The following mem-

bers were present: Miss Althea Sherman, Messrs. Blain, Chambers, Daggett, Grey, Layne, Miller, Rich, Zahn, and Law, and as a visitor, Mr. W. E. Lewis, of Gate, Oklahoma.

The minutes of the December meeting were read and approved. Upon motion by Dr. Rich, seconded by Mr. Zahn, and duly carried, the Secretary was instructed to cast the unanimous ballot of those present electing to active membership Messrs. Charles S. Moore, M. B. Rice, John McB. Robertson, and O. P. Silliman, proposed at the last meeting.

Applications for membership were presented as follows: E. E. Everett, Ventura, Calif., proposed by J. S. Appleton; Mable C. Gage, Worcester, Mass., proposed by J. Grinnell; Claus Johan Murie, 809 Yeon Bldg., Portland, Oregon, proposed by Stanley G. Jewett; John B. Perrin, Tucson, Arizona, proposed by A. B. Howell; Asa Sleeth, 1025 Michigan Ave., Portland, Oregon, proposed by Stanley G. Jewett.

The Secretary then read the complete report of the Business Managers for the year 1912, showing a decided progress in the financial affairs of the Club. THE CONDOR has become practically self-supporting, and it is hoped that before long the Business Managers will be able to arrange to publish Avifaunas without calling for private subscriptions. Upon motion by Mr. Miller, seconded by Dr. Rich, and duly carried, the report of the Business Managers was accepted.

Upon motion by Mr. Zahn, seconded by Mr. Layne, the Chairman was instructed to cast the unanimous ballot of those present electing for 1913 the officers nominated at the last meeting, as follows: President, J. E. Law; Vice-President, Howard Robertson; Secretary, A. B. Howell. Adjourned.—J. E. LAW, *Secretary*.

### NORTHERN DIVISION

JANUARY.—The regular monthly meeting of the Northern Division was held at the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, Thursday evening, January 16, with vice-president Carriger in the chair. The following members were present: Mrs. H. W. Grinnell, and Messrs. Bryant, Chandler, Carriger, Gee, Grinnell, Heinemann, Loshinski, Shelton, Smith, Storer, and Swarth. Mr. E. P. Rankin was a visitor.

The minutes of the December meeting were read and approved, as also the Southern Division minutes for November and December. Candidates for admission to the Club, proposed at the last meeting, were elected as follows: O. P. Silliman, Castroville, Calif., and M. B. Rice, Cascadia, Oregon. One new name was presented, E. E. Everett, Ventura, California, by J. S. Appleton.