

mains as held to by the A. O. U. Committee. But Ridgway remarks (foot-note, page 279) that "if *S. nuchalis* is to be considered as merely a sub-species of *S. varius* then, most certainly, must *S. ruber* also." He inclines to the belief that all three are distinct species, the occasional intermediates being viewed as hybrids, much as in the case of the flickers. While *S. v. daggetti* is synonymized under *S. ruber ruber*, a foot-note (page 286) is indicative of Ridgway's general attitude of open-mindedness. He says: "Mr. Swarth [Univ. Calif. Publ. Zool., x, 1912, page 35] seems to have made out a good case in favor of restriction of the name *ruber* to the northern form instead of the southern one. Unfortunately it is now too late for me to reopen the question."

"Western North America, east to and including Rocky Mountains; north to northern Alaska . . . ; south to western Mexico . . ." is the range assigned to the Western Belted Kingfisher, *Streptoceryle alcyon caurina* (Grinnell).

The Frosted Poor-will of the A. O. U. Check-list is thrown out by Ridgway, who lists the appertaining references (to *Phalaenoptilus nuttalli nitidus*) under *P. n. nuttalli*.

Our Barn Owl becomes *Tyto perlata pratincola*, this name applying to the species clear across North America and south to Nicaragua. "I am unable to discover constant differences of coloration between specimens from the eastern and western United States or between these and those from Mexico" (foot-note, page 606). *Tyto perlata perlata* is South American. *T. albus* of Europe is considered specifically distinct (page 601).

The supposed northwestern race of Saw-whet Owl, *Nyctala acadica scotaea* Osgood, is suppressed, this name appearing in the synonymy of *Cryptoglaux acadica* (page 633). Mr. Ridgway is unable "to make out any geographic variation in this species except a slight average difference in the hue of the brown of the upper and under parts, which is reddest in examples from the Pacific coast district", more grayish brown in those from the Rocky Mountains, and intermediate in those from the Atlantic side. These differences, as shown by present material, are not "sufficiently marked and constant to warrant subspecific division".

The Screech Owl of the Colorado Valley, named by Swarth *Otus asio gilmani*, is considered (foot-note, page 702) inseparable from the longer known *Otus asio cineraceus* (Ridgway), which ranges through southern Arizona. A new subspecies is described (page

700), *Otus asio brewsteri*, from the coast region of Oregon.

Of particular interest is Mr. Ridgway's conclusion, after adequate study of the case, that the Flammulated Screech Owl, *Otus flammeotus* (Kaup), presents absolutely no geographic variation. In other words no grounds whatever are found for recognizing a race *Otus asio idahoensis* (Merriam), which name has been allotted prominent place in western literature for over twenty years.

The Pigmy Owls along the Pacific coast are recognized as of three subspecies: *Glaucidium gnoma californicum* (Sclater), of the San Diegan district, the Sierra Nevada and the Cascades; *G. g. grinnelli* Ridgway (here newly named), of the humid coast belt from Monterey County to the mainland of British Columbia; and *G. g. swarthi* Grinnell, of Vancouver Island. The name *vigilante*, of Grinnell, becomes a synonym of *californicum*, owing to the discovery by Ridgway that Sclater's type, still extant in the Philadelphia Academy, belongs to the interior and southern form.

Mr. Ridgway finds that the Elf Owl presents three geographic races: *Micropallas whitneyi whitneyi* (Cooper), of southeastern California, southern Arizona and southwestern New Mexico; *M. w. sanfordi*, of southern Lower California; and *M. w. idoneus* of southern Texas and northeastern Mexico. The two latter forms are here newly described and named.—J. GRINNELL.

A MONOGRAPH OF THE GENUS CHORDEILES SWAINSON, TYPE OF A NEW FAMILY OF GOATSUCKERS. By HARRY C. OBERHOLSER. [—United States National Museum, Bull. 86, April 6, 1914, pp. i-viii, 1-123, 6 plates.]

In this study of the nighthawks Mr. Oberholser has many changes to suggest in the generally accepted treatment of the group; and his researches in the genus *Chordeiles* have also incidentally resulted in important conclusions regarding certain others of the goatsuckers. The nighthawks, comprising the genus *Chordeiles*, are purely American in their distribution, while two of the three recognized species are distributed over much of that portion of America covered by the A. O. U. Check-List. They form an apparently well defined and circumscribed group of birds, and for various reasons afford an excellent subject for monographic treatment, there having been obvious necessity for such a study. Of the difficulties attending the work, one of the greatest was the need of a prodigious amount of material, while from the nature of the birds the average collector

gathers comparatively few specimens, and these frequently most indifferently prepared. With 1165 skins, however, the combined series of many public and private collections, the author appears to have had the subject matter sufficient to cover most of the points involved, though it is easy to appreciate his statement that the elucidation of the group "involved the expenditure of an incredible amount of time and labor".

Some of the most important of the conclusions reached by Mr. Oberholser are as follows. A new family, Chordeilidae, is erected, with *Chordeiles* as the type genus, and including also the genera *Nannochordeiles*, *Nyctiprogne*, *Lurocalis*, and *Podager*, the last four being all from outside the limits of the *Check-List*. The three species of *Chordeiles* are treated in minutest detail, *virginianus* with nine subspecies, *acutipennis* with five, and *rupestris* with three. One new subspecies of *Chordeiles virginianus* is described, *C. v. howelli*, from the central United States, breeding north to Wyoming, south to central Texas. *C. v. aserriensis* Cherrie, based on winter birds from Central America, is revived and considered applicable to the form breeding in southern Texas and extreme northeastern Mexico. Of *Chordeiles acutipennis* a new subspecies, *C. a. micromeris*, is described from Central America, and another, *C. a. inferior*, from Lower California. *Chordeiles rupestris*, confined to South America, is, from the paucity of material, necessarily passed over in a somewhat cursory manner, compared with the treatment accorded the others, but one new subspecies is described here also, *C. r. zaleucus*, from Peru.

In the introductory pages of the work there are some important discussions relative to branches of the Caprimulgi other than *Chordeiles*. The genus *Antrostomus* is divided, only one species, *carolinensis*, being left in *Antrostomus*, while a new genus, *Stochalcis*, is described, with *Caprimulgus vociferus* Wilson as type, and inclusive of certain other species heretofore referred to *Antrostomus*, mostly Middle and South American in their distribution. Mr. Oberholser considers *Antrostomus vociferus arizonae* Brewster to be a recognizable form, and distinct from *A. v. macromystax*, under which it is synonymized by the A. O. U. Committee.

Altogether it seems evident that this study is one of the most important contributions thus far made to the literature of American Caprimulgi. There will probably be differences of opinion as to the need of sep-

arately naming certain of the forms here recognized, but this is not a feature to detract from the value of such a work. The trained specialist, laboring on some special group, and poring for weeks or months in painstaking study over large series of specimens, will certainly see things that the more casual observer can not be expected to appreciate, and it will doubtless always be impossible to bring everyone in accord in such matters. The conclusions of a student such as Mr. Oberholser, reached after most careful consideration of ample material, are deserving of the utmost respect; and doubtless the majority of ornithologists will be quite content to accept his decisions, at least until some future worker with greater opportunities arises to revise the subject further. On the other hand, it is possible to see how it may not be expedient to admit in such a manual as the A. O. U. *Check-List* all of the finely differentiated geographical races, based on average differences, which the specialist feels obliged to describe, such action not necessarily implying disbelief in the statements of the latter. In other words, the student, in order to properly elucidate his problem, may feel obliged to attach a name to a race which, as far as concerns the ordinary user of an average manual of the subject, had best be omitted from such a catalogue.

To the present reviewer the work under consideration appears to be most excellent in every way. It is well conceived and carefully executed to the smallest detail; the subject matter is divided and set off in such a way as to make everything readily accessible; while the facts themselves and the deductions derived therefrom are presented by one who is evidently master of his subject.—H. S. SWARTH.

MINUTES OF COOPER CLUB MEETINGS

SOUTHERN DIVISION

APRIL.—The regular meeting of the Southern Division was held at the Museum of History, Science, and Art, Thursday evening, April 30, 1914, with the following members in attendance. Messrs. Chambers, Daggett, Edwards, Miller, Morcom, Rich, Robertson, Swarth, Willett, and Wyman. In the absence of the president, vice-president Robertson took the chair. The minutes of the March meeting were read and approved, followed by the minutes of the Northern Division for April. The following new members were elected: C. A. Brant, El Tovar, Grand Canyon, Arizona; William T. Martin,