

in the herbage on the bottom of a dried up pond, from which the water had long since gone. This was about a quarter of a mile from water of any kind. A careful search in different directions failed to reveal any more birds of this species, although there was a very extensive migration of land birds as well as water birds. In the stomach of one was the assembled remains of a good sized grasshopper, carefully dismembered, and I was surprised to find that even the coarse, prickly hind legs had been eaten whole.

On the same day I walked up to within twenty feet of a flock of seven Pectoral Sandpipers (*Pisobia maculata*), an interesting bird on the Pacific coast, and watched them for ten minutes. They did not show the slightest fear, feeding up to within a few feet.

Another interesting specimen taken was an adult female Black Pigeon Hawk (*Falco columbarius suckleyi*), which completed my bag of three birds for the day.—J. HOOPER BOWLES, *Tacoma, Washington, September 11, 1919.*

One Reason for Eliminating Subspecies.—In the recent discussion in the CONDOR on the multiplication of subspecies no one has put forward a reason against them quite so final as that quoted by Prof. F. W. Oliver in his life of Arthur Henfrey (*Makers of British Botany*). Of this great exponent of the 'New Botany' Prof. Oliver says (p. 201): "He more than once expresses the opinion that there was too great a tendency to lump species in the handbooks to the Flora, and he urged on the occasion of the preparation of the third edition of the *London Catalogue of British Plants* that many more forms should find recognition. The editors of the catalogue however successfully opposed the suggestion on the ingenious grounds that it would raise the weight for postage beyond the limits of a blue (twopenny) stamp."—J. H. FLEMING, *Toronto, Ontario, September 4, 1919.*

A Tradition Nearly Broken.—The discovery was made on the fourth of July, 1919. The writer in company with B. P. Carpenter and friends was searching for oological treasure on a small rocky island of the Coronados group off the coast of Lower California.

A number of petrel nests had been unearthed, each of which contained the traditional single egg or young. But in nearly every colony of nesting birds one finds something unusual and this community proved to be no exception. An egg of the Socorro Petrel (*Oceanodroma socorroensis*) was removed from beneath the parent bird which was of unusual dimensions, measuring 1.50x1.12 inches, whereas a normal egg measures but 1.10x.85 inches. Upon blowing the specimen it proved to be fresh, and contained two yolks. Did not this bird have a set of two eggs started, and did not nature rather than have so time honored a custom broken provide but the one shell?—N. K. CARPENTER, HOOPER BOWLES, *Tacoma, Washington, September 11, 1919.*

Some Southern Records of the Horned Puffin.—Judging by the take of specimens the Horned Puffin (*Fratercula corniculata*) has been but a rare visitant along our coast. That this species may at certain times occur in considerable numbers appears to be evidenced by the note in the May-June CONDOR (p. 128) by Franklin J. Smith, and by the following additional records.

Mr. Wm. C. Bohrmann of San Francisco recently presented to the writer a splendid photograph of a Horned Puffin taken at Mussel Rock, March 2, 1919. The bird was found on the ocean beach still alive, but unable to fly. Quoting from a letter: "I carried this bird in my pocket for a mile or so toward the Cliff House. Had figured that some night-prowling raccoon would get him if I left him on the beach. But he looked so miserably unhappy that I finally decided to give him his small chance for life, and I let him go."

Richard Hocking has furnished material for the following note: Mrs. A. S. Allen and Richard Hocking of Berkeley went to Montara Beach on May 24, 1919, to look for some dead birds seen in the same place a week before. Here were found eight Tufted Puf-

fins, two Horned Puffins, two California Murres and one Cormorant. These birds were scattered in the drift wood and had evidently been killed by oil. One Horned Puffin brought back is now skeleton no. 30714 in the California Museum of Vertebrate Zoology. On May 17, 1919, Mrs. Hocking obtained a Horned Puffin at Coast Ways, near Pescadero, which is now specimen no. 30713 in the Museum.—HAROLD C. BRYANT, *Berkeley, California, June 26, 1919.*

EDITORIAL NOTES AND NEWS

Criticism has come to the Editor of THE CONDOR either directly or, more often, through indirect channels relative to the kinds of articles being published. Such criticism is various, to the effect that our magazine should publish proportionately more local lists, or fewer local lists; more reviews or no reviews at all; more life history accounts; etc., etc. Here is one determining factor, taking into consideration the volume for 1919, which concludes with this issue: We have put out just as many pages (252) as the money available pays for, this being determined by very close calculation on the part of our Business Managers. Now, as furnishing data to govern the Editor in the future, he hereby requests such of our readers as are sincerely concerned for the welfare of THE CONDOR to look over volume XXI critically and to write to him frankly as follows: What class of articles appeared to you as most worth publishing? What class of contributions—reviews, minutes, communications, lists, autobiographies—might have been left out altogether, their place being taken by other, more worthy, matter? What were the best kinds of illustrations, and what others might well have been omitted? The status of the annual roster was settled by vote of the Club early in the present year—and favorably to the continuance of that feature. Now the Editor invites views in regard to the further policy of THE CONDOR as outlined above. We cannot publish any greater amount of material with the limited funds in hand; but we *can* change the *kind* of matter printed to some degree, although limited always by the kind and amount furnished by our contributors. *What are your ideas?*

As regards the splitting of genera, in other words, the determination of the limits of any genus, we would call the attention of our readers to the article in the October (1919) *Auk*, by Mr. Ned Hollister, entitled "The systematic position of the Ring-necked Duck". Mr. Hollister's conclusions in regard to the constitution of the Genus *Marila* are certainly based on a sound and clearly set forth line of reasoning. It will be remembered that it has been recently proposed to set off the Canvasback in one genus, the Redhead in another, and the Scaups in a third! Hollister's careful study of the facts, and of the other considerations involved,

shows that *Marila* as it now stands should be "left without any subdivision at all"—with which conclusion we heartily concur.

The current tendency in some quarters toward the suppression of the private collector seems to have gone to great lengths in Minnesota. In Dr. T. S. Roberts' useful and attractive handbook entitled "A review of the ornithology of Minnesota" (May, 1919) we find a statement in the "Addendum" to the effect that permits to collect birds, nests and eggs for scientific purposes are in that state to be issued *only* to public institutions that maintain zoological collections. Dr. Roberts points out that this attitude is directly opposite to that taken by the Federal government and that the effect will be directly toward discouraging interest in ornithology and will eventually lead to a dearth of trained ornithologists. We entirely agree with the stand which he takes.

Mr. George Willett has established himself and family for the winter at Craig, Prince of Wales Island, Alaska. He has arranged to devote practically his entire time to ornithology, and since he is, as far as we know, the first active bird student to winter in southeastern Alaska we may expect valuable results in the way of new facts concerning the seasonal behavior of the birds there. Practically nothing is now known, for instance, in regard to the route of migration of many of the birds which summer in western Alaska and which winter in California. Whether or not they follow the coast line closely, traversing the outer of the coastal islands, or whether they pursue an off-shore route more or less distant from the land, remains to be proved. Mr. Willett's findings will doubtless bear importantly upon this problem.

The Thirty-seventh Stated Meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union was held in New York City, November 11 to 14. Fellows elected were Alexander Wetmore and Joseph H. Riley; Henry W. Henshaw became a Retired Fellow. The only Western Fellow in attendance was Harry S. Swarth, representing the California Museum of Vertebrate Zoology.

Four months of biological field work has been carried forward in the State of Wash-