

## EDITORIAL NOTES AND NEWS

We are struck with the cogency of the suggestion made by Mr. Leverett Mills Loomis in the January, 1920, *Auk* (p. 91); namely, that the projected "Systema Avium" might well serve as a new starting point for ornithological names. This could be done arbitrarily, just as with Linnaeus, 1758, by action of the International Zoological Congress. Majority vote of representatives of the ornithologists of the world would probably suffice to initiate such action. Surely everyone yearns for permanency of names!

The report of the Business Managers for 1919 was presented to both Divisions of the Cooper Ornithological Club at the February meetings and indicates a healthy condition of the Club's finances. The cost of producing *THE CONDOR* was the greatest in its history, and the receipts were greater than in any year except 1916. Avifauna number 13 was issued and has met with ready and extensive sale. Sales of back numbers and complete files were never so active as now, and applications for membership constantly exceed the lapses. A total of \$4167.50 has already been pledged for the Endowment Fund and \$1460.00 of this amount has been received. Contributions to this fund, more than almost anything else, spell encouragement to business managers and editors alike, since it denotes a substantial appreciation of past efforts in behalf of the Club and a desire to stabilize and perpetuate the foundation on which, in the last analysis, the productivity of the organization must stand, namely, money to print and distribute such contributions as from time to time become available.

We received a gratifying number of replies to our request for editorial "ideas" in the last November *CONDOR*, enough to show that a good many persons are decidedly alive to the interests of our magazine. To sum up, opinion seems pretty well agreed that the most interesting feature of *THE CONDOR* is the "Field and Study" department, in other words, that, upon receipt of an issue, the brief "Field and Study" items are read first. Second in point of interest are declared to be the personal biographies, and third, the accounts of life histories of particular birds. Last in general interest comes the "annotated list". Our policy in the future will be modified in a measure by the returns obtained. But we will continue to publish lists, when of decided merit, and other matter, such as descriptions, which are primarily of scientific importance. It is the function of *THE CONDOR* to serve as a medium for recording ornithology, as well as to furnish articles of a "readable" character. Then too, the Editor must be controlled largely in the kind of material he presents by the

kind and quantity offered. The ideal situation is where a large assortment is available, from which he can select the best.

A "Pacific Northwest Bird and Mammal Club" has been organized, with headquarters in Seattle. The objects of this club are "to promote social and fraternal relations among the working ornithologists and mammalogists of Washington, Oregon, British Columbia and Alaska", and "to promote interest in the scientific study of birds and mammals within the region named". There is certainly need for a club of just this sort, and there are already located in the Puget Sound district a considerable number of active naturalists to give the undertaking impetus. We predict a successful future for it. Persons desiring further information concerning this organization should apply to Mr. F. S. Hall, Director of the State Museum, University of Washington, Seattle.

Mr. Ernest P. Walker, until last fall stationed at Wrangell, Alaska, where he was Inspector under the United States Bureau of Fisheries, has now entered the service of the Biological Survey, United States Department of Agriculture. He is located at Phoenix, Arizona, and is serving as Warden under the Migratory-Bird Treaty and Lacey acts.

### PUBLICATIONS REVIEWED

A REVISION OF THE SUBSPECIES OF *PASSERCULUS ROSTRATUS* (CASSIN). By Harry C. Oberholser. The Ohio Journal of Science, vol. xix, no. 6, April, 1919, pp. 344-354.

There are features quite apart from the systematic treatment of the species here considered that render this paper one of exceptional interest to Californian bird students. The abundance of the Large-billed Sparrow in its winter home in southern California has made still more tantalizing the mystery of its breeding range, for it seemed evident that the nesting grounds, though unknown, could not lie so very far from our doors. While, as regards the subspecies *Passerculus r. rostratus*, the author can contribute nothing to our knowledge of the nest or eggs, he maps the breeding range on the basis of specimens taken during what must be the nesting season.

Three subspecies of *Passerculus rostratus* are here recognized, *P. r. rostratus*, breeding at the head of the Gulf of California, in Lower California and Sonora; *P. r. guttatus*, breeding on the San Benito Islands, central western Lower California; and *P. r. halophilus*, breeding on the mainland of central

western Lower California. *Passerculus sanctorum* is regarded as a synonym of *P. r. guttatus*.

The migrations performed by *rostratus* and *guttatus* are pointed out by the author as "almost, if not quite, unique" among North American birds, for the movement is both north and south from the breeding ground to the winter home. The travels of *rostratus* are especially curious. "Part of the individuals of the typical subspecies winter in its breeding area, but the great majority begin, by the middle of August, to leave their breeding ground, whence they move in various directions, some of them southeast along the Sonoran coast, others due south into Lower California, others west to the northern part of Lower California, and still others northwest to the coast of southern California, reaching the extremes of their winter range almost simultaneously, and regularly becoming common at Cape San Lucas and in Los Angeles County, California, by at least the first of September." There is no movement, however, directly north or to the northeast.

It is a pity that so important a paper should be published in a journal that is seen by so few ornithologists. Californian bird students in particular will be deeply interested in this study, but most of them will doubtless have difficulty in finding a copy of the publication.—H. S. SWARTH.

## MINUTES OF COOPER CLUB MEETINGS

### SOUTHERN DIVISION

DECEMBER.—The regular monthly meeting of the Cooper Ornithological Club, Southern Division, was held at the Museum of History, Science and Art, December 23, 1919, at 8:00 P. M. President Miller officiated, with other members in attendance as follows: Messrs. Barnes, Chambers, Brown, Daggett, Dickey, Esterly, Hanaford, Hoffman, Palmer, Robertson, Trenor, van Rossem, and Wyman, and Mrs. J. T. Allen. Mrs. Wyman and Master Alden Miller were visitors.

Minutes of the November meeting were read and approved, while an accumulation of minutes of the Northern Division was read by title only. On motion by Mr. Robertson, seconded by Dr. Esterly, the Secretary was instructed to cast an electing ballot for those parties whose names were presented at the previous meeting. New applicants were: George Tonkin, Boise, Idaho, by Stanley G. Jewett; Turner E. McMullen, Camden,

New Jersey, by H. Arden Edwards; and the following by W. Lee Chambers: Albert D. McGrew, Seattle, Wash.; R. A. Powell, Fresno; F. H. Girvin, Brawley; Horace Gunthorp, Topeka, Kansas; Ralph Hoffmann, Santa Barbara; Frank Richmond, El Centro.

Names from the Northern Division, for approval, were: Francis Harper, Washington, D. C.; Raymond Wheatley Moore, Washington, D. C.; Mrs. Ernest B. Price, Piedmont; H. M. Harrison, Cambridge, Maryland; Lyle R. Fletcher, Norton, Kansas; Isabel Ames, San Francisco; Miss Elizabeth Hendren, Occidental; Mrs. E. C. Pitcher, Hayward; Miss Bessie M. Lander, Exeter; Mrs. Edwin B. Mead, Berkeley; Miss Susan H. Mackay, Berkeley.

On motion by Mr. Daggett, seconded by Mr. Robertson, that the chair appoint a committee to nominate officers for the coming year, President Miller named Messrs. Dickey, Chambers and Brown.

The following resolution, already adopted by the Northern Division, was read, and on motion by Mr. Dickey, seconded by Dr. Esterly, was adopted:

Resolved, that a permanent endowment fund be created by the Cooper Ornithological Club out of all payments for life memberships, heretofore received or hereafter to be received, and out of all moneys received for the purpose of such fund.

And be it further resolved that a committee of three members, namely, Messrs. J. Eugene Law (Chairman), W. Lee Chambers, and A. Brazier Howell, be hereby authorized to solicit, collect and invest said moneys for this endowment, the securities to be vested in the name of one or the other of the committee as "Trustee for the Cooper Ornithological Club." Said committee shall make an annual report of such funds as shall have been collected, to include a statement of the disposition of both principal and interest.

And be it further resolved that the income from such endowment fund shall be used for publication purposes in connection with THE CONDOR and PACIFIC COAST AVIFAUNA series."

Formal business ended, there followed the usual period of general discussion, comparison of recent observations, and inspection of study skins, during which Judge Barnes reported success in breeding the Blue Goose in captivity. An interesting horned owl, taken in a most extraordinary manner, was exhibited by Mr. van Rossem. Adjourned.—L. E. WYMAN, *Secretary*.