

Yet when one finds that this measurement in groups of 11 males from Marin County, 10 from Sonoma County, and 8 from Suisun, Solano County, averages 2.6 mm. in each group, while the distance from nostril to end of bill averages respectively 15.1, 15.8, and 16.1 mm., you have something to compare with a group of males (11) from Stockton, which shows the former measurement to be 3.0 and the latter 15.4 mm., making it apparent that the bill of the Stockton bird is appreciably thicker than any of the above groups. Again, a Tuolumne River group of 13 males has 3.3 and 15.2 mm. for these measurements, showing a still heavier bill than the Stockton bird.

While the variations among different groups of the same species may weaken the significance of this data to some extent, it is still valuable when used in conjunction with other characteristics. However, not having had sufficient opportunity to carry on these studies to a conclusion I will not dwell longer upon the subject, but will close by saying that I shall be glad to be of service, if needed, to any one indulging in this pastime.—JOSEPH MAILLIARD, *California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco, January 21, 1921.*

Pileated Woodpecker versus Cooper Hawk.—On January 31, 1921, while we were on our way to Mirror Lake, Yosemite Valley, we heard the loud, ringing call of the Pileated Woodpecker. Looking up we saw two rather large birds dashing through the treetops. The dark bird with the white wing-patches we recognized at once as a Pileated; the lighter colored bird turned out to be a Cooper Hawk. A pursuit was apparently in progress, but as the birds dashed through the branches of the tall trees it was impossible to be sure which of the birds was the pursuer and which the pursued. Both birds quickly left our range of vision, but a little farther on we heard gentle tapplings and soon located the woodpecker. The hawk was there, too, perched on a limb a few feet away. The woodpecker was drilling and prying off chips with apparent unconcern, while the hawk looked on with seemingly hungry eyes. While we were watching, the hawk flew to a branch a few feet above the woodpecker. Pileated tilted his head and gave the hawk a sidelong glance and then deliberately flew toward him and drove him from the tree. With the hawk gone, the woodpecker went on with his drilling as though nothing had happened. Perhaps the hawk saw visions of a good meal, but lacked the courage to attack a bird so well equipped to give battle.—CHAS. W. MICHAEL, *Yosemite, California, February 2, 1921.*

Two Unusual Winter Records for the San Francisco Bay Region.—The White-throated Sparrow (*Zonotrichia albicollis*), a rare winter visitor to this region, has once more appeared on the campus at the University of California, Berkeley, after an apparent absence during the winter of 1919-1920. A single individual was observed in company with two Golden-crowned Sparrows foraging in the shelter of shrubbery along Strawberry Creek, December 17, 1920.

On December 19, 1920, a stormy day, with heavy wind, at my home in Oakland, I was attracted by an unusual bird call. I could not identify the bird at this time because it flew too quickly into shrubbery, but subsequent visits proved it to be a Western Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos leucopterus*). Other known dates of this bird's visits to my garden, where it has spent most of its time in a large toyon berry bush, are December 26, 1920, and January 2, 16, and 24, 1921. Every visit has been announced by harsh, unmusical call notes.—MARGARET W. WYTHE, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, February 17, 1921.*

An Afternoon with the Holboell Grebe.—In the last issue of the Condor I read an interesting article on the nesting of the Pied-billed Grebe and its habit of carrying its young on its back. The writer of the article, Mr. Bancroft, says that the young were not carried under when the parent bird dived. Perhaps the following passage from my note-book, which treats of this Grebe habit, may be of interest:

On the afternoon of June 24, 1914, I loaded my canoe in the democrat and went with a friend to Silvermore Lake. After launching our canoe we found nine nests of Holboell Grebe (*Colymbus holboellii*), with 2/3, 2/2, 1/6, 3/1 and 1/4 eggs, respectively. While paddling around we noticed a Grebe swimming along with a young one on her back. At times the young bird was almost invisible beneath her feathers and wings as it moved

Mar., 1921

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

around. On our approach the parent bird dived with the young one on her back and carried it several yards under water. The young bird came up first and seemed bewildered or lost. We paddled up to it and my friend answered its plaintive peeping, whereupon it swam up to the canoe and into his open hand. We admired the curiously colored little fellow a while and then turned him loose.—A. D. HENDERSON, *Belvedere, Alberta, December 20, 1920.*

EDITORIAL NOTES AND NEWS

The Cooper Ornithological Club, by amendments to its constitution duly approved by both Divisions in January and February, 1921, has created an executive body to be known as the Board of Governors and to consist of the ex-presidents and the acting officers of the Club. This reorganization seemed expedient in view of the gratifying growth of the Endowment Fund, in order to insure this Fund to the purpose for which it is being created, namely, for the publication of contributions to ornithological knowledge. The Fund itself will insure continuity of output.

Dr. Miller raises some questions in his "communication" in another column which have important current bearing. He urges that great care be taken in levying criticism, either privately or in print, to couch one's terms in courteous phraseology, so that no feeling of personal resentment can possibly be aroused. With this ideal we heartily agree. But it is not an easy thing to accomplish in practice, no matter how carefully one may strive with this very point in view. We believe that honest, outspoken criticism *does* function usefully, even when published (and, we believe, Dr. Miller would readily grant this). Direct, clear criticism is needed now and then, from one authority, of the writings of another. This is stimulating and beneficial, to the lesser students in the same field as well as to each of the principals themselves. If the nicer proprieties have been observed in mode of expression, so much the better. We will welcome contributions to *THE CONDOR* which are wholesomely critical in nature.

Part one of *The Birds of California* has appeared, and parts two and three are announced to come out shortly, with others up to 30 or so to follow. Thus the work so long in hand by Mr. William Leon Dawson has begun to bring tangible results. And no subscriber who has seen this first installment, of 64 pages and a full complement of colored plates, photogravures and text-illustrations, will be disappointed. This is far and away the best thing, from an artistic standpoint at least, that has ever been published concerning western bird-life; and the text is informational and entertaining to a

gratifying degree. We congratulate the author upon the high merits of this initial installment, and extend our earnest wishes that nothing will interrupt the continuity of issue until the entire work is published, with the same plane of excellence maintained throughout.

The natural history collections of Mr. Harold H. Bailey, formerly of Newport News, Virginia, have been moved to Miami Beach, Florida. They will there form the nucleus of a museum soon to be established in conjunction with a zoological park. Exhibits of mounted birds and mammals are planned, as well as a study collection. Five acres of ground have been allotted to the new project, and work has been started on the museum building. Mr. Bailey will be at the head of the museum and of the zoological garden. In connection with his new activities he already has well under way a book upon the birds of Florida, to be of similar nature to his "Birds of Virginia".

A letter received from Dr. Alexander Wetmore, now engaged in field work in Argentina for the United States Biological Survey, contains a suggestion of the many interesting discoveries he is making. Dr. Wetmore arrived at Buenos Ayres on June 21, in the winter season, and proceeded at once to extreme northern Argentina. There his work lay in "the strange and interesting area known as the Chaco, lying west of the Rio Paraguay and extending from northern Argentina north into Bolivia". Later he returned southward with the advent of spring, encountering various Argentine species then on their spring migration *southward* to their breeding grounds, and, still later, toward the end of July, certain North American shore-birds just arriving at their winter home. Brief mention of a falcon with "well-developed powder downs", of an "odd-looking Mimid" with "broad lateral apteria in the feather tracts of the sides of the neck that in life are bright orange yellow in color", and of a teal that habitually perches in trees, gives promise of future accounts of the anatomical peculiarities of tropical birds even more interesting than some Dr. Wetmore has already discovered in certain of our better known North American birds.