

PUBLICATIONS REVIEWED

LIFE HISTORIES OF NORTH AMERICAN PEWEEES AND PELICANS AND THEIR ALLIES. ORDER TUBINARES AND ORDER STEGANOPODES. By ARTHUR CLEVELAND BENT. United States National Museum, Bulletin 121, xii+343 pp., 69 pls.; 1922.

It is gratifying to see the several volumes of Mr. Bent's work appearing in as quick succession as the first three parts have come out, giving hopeful assurance that this laborious undertaking will be successfully pursued to the finish. Bibliographically, each publication is a separate book, being issued as differently numbered "Bulletins" of the National Museum; as a matter of fact, of course, they form consecutive volumes under the same general plan, and the last one out, here under consideration, very properly does not differ materially from its predecessors in its treatment of the subject matter (see Condor, XXII, 1920, p. 45).

It is a matter of congratulation to North American bird students that they should have accessible the information here made available, with carefully written first-hand accounts, just as carefully compiled quotations from published sources of information, and an abundance of instructive illustrations. Mention should be made also of the several chapters written by Dr. Charles Wendell Townsend, treating of certain North Atlantic species, well known to him, and, by his attractive presentations, brought vividly before the reader. On the whole, the reviewer closed the volume last received, after a rather lengthy preliminary examination, with a feeling of enthusiastic admiration, both for the energy involved in accumulating the great amount of data here assembled, and for the ability displayed in bringing this mass of information into attractive and usable form. There may be, doubtless there are, minor errors committed here and there, but the reviewer can claim little or no acquaintance with most of the birds described, and he was consequently free to read and enjoy, with no temptation to pick flaws in matters of detail.

The impression he received was favorable, so extremely favorable in general as to leave one point of disagreement (a feature in which this volume differs from its two predecessors) looming up in almost disproportionate prominence. In short, the author has handled his life history mate-

rial so well, so very well indeed, that one deploras the fact that he did not stick to life histories and leave matters of nomenclature alone. In the "Introduction", explaining departures from the nomenclature of the American Ornithologists' Union *Check-list*, the statement is made that "now that a new check list is in preparation, it seems best to adopt the names that will probably appear in the new check list, so far as they are now understood by the author."

To the reviewer this seems a most unfortunate course for the author to have taken. Many bird species are here treated under names that are absolutely unfamiliar to most of his readers. And what reasons are there for him to adopt such changes? What assurance is there that these changes will appear in the new check-list? In most cases they arise from excessive splitting of genera, carried to extreme lengths in the last few years. There are many ornithologists who deprecate such splitting, with the frequently resultant monotypic genera; who devoutly hope that most of the changes endorsed by Mr. Bent will *not* appear in the new check list; and who are anxious to do everything possible to prevent such appearances. In the meantime, before the new check list appears, surely it is better to stick to the names in the old one, especially so in the case of a publication like the one here reviewed.—H. S. SWARTH.

MINUTES OF COOPER CLUB MEETINGS

NORTHERN DIVISION

OCTOBER.—The regular meeting of the Northern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was held at the usual time and place on October 26, 1922. In the absence of both president and vice-president, Mr. A. S. Kibbe was asked to preside. Members present were Mesdames Allen, Grinnell, Kibbe, Mead, Reygadas, and Schlesinger; Misses Burk, Flinn, and Gunn; Messrs. Bunker, Camp, Carriger, Dixon, Grinnell, W. Grinnell, Kibbe, Kofoid, Labarthe, Torrey; visitors, Mrs. Evermann, Mrs. Gunn, Mrs. Field, and Miss Catten. September minutes were read and approved and August and September minutes of the Southern Division were read. Miss Susan Beaman, Cora L. Williams Institute, Berkeley, was presented for membership by Mrs. J. T. Allen. Mr. G. Freen