

EDITORIAL NOTES AND NEWS

A section of the ornithological field on the Pacific Coast now unoccupied is that dealing with migration. There is badly needed a leader for the development of this subject, someone gifted to handle vast masses of facts systematically and accurately. The problems here are doubtless not altogether the same as those east of the Rockies, where practically all of the American work on migration so far has been done. Here in the West we have the factor of altitude complicating the influence of latitude. It is even possible that certain currently held theories of migration would be upset by conclusions from studies in the topographically diversified West.

The annual Cooper Club "roster" appearing in this issue of *THE CONDOR* shows a total membership of 859. This is in considerable excess of any previous year's total and betokens a further significant extension in the serious interest being taken in the study of birds. Ornithology as a mental recreation, as an intellectual stimulus, is being more and more generally taken up among people who are very busy otherwise with affairs of importance.

COMMUNICATIONS

A SOCIETY TO PROTECT WILD LIFE FROM THE PROTECTIONISTS

Editor *THE CONDOR*:

Your attention is hereby called to a certain class of people, who, believing themselves ardent conservationists, are by their extreme position in advocating all-embracing protection frustrating the aims for which they are striving. It appears to some of us that a little more of such misdirected energy will force us into founding a society to protect wild life from the protectionists.

Excellent examples of the manner in which this all-protection is working were given about a year ago in the *Canadian Field-Naturalist*, showing that protected Western Gulls, Hawks, Owls, and Crows are defeating the very object for which certain bird sanctuaries have been established.

Another illustration of an extremity in words, if not in action, to which some protectionists have gone is furnished by the

revised constitution of the conservation society of one of our states in which appear these words: "The objects of the association are:

- I. To protect, develop and conserve Iowa's natural resources, viz:
 - (a) All native plants, trees and forests;
 - (b) All native birds, fish and animals;
 - (c) All streams, lakes, rivers and waterways;
 - (d) All spots of scenic and historic interests."

Since with only four dissenting voices this revision was adopted, one is constrained to seek an explanation. Perhaps it is because Section 1 looks like blank verse, perhaps it is blank verse (the poet must decide that). It certainly looks blank: to some people distressingly blank, to others profanely blank.

In this state in which most of the conservationists pledged themselves to protect, develop and conserve poison ivy, ragweeds, milkweeds, rattlesnakes, woodchucks, cotton-tail rabbits, pocket gophers, ground squirrels, potato bugs, May beetles, squash bugs, cutworms, and army worms, in 1924 in one county there were paid bounties on 4139 pocket gophers and on 976 rattlesnakes; two fur buyers shipped 6000 pelts; and a farmer in his corn-field shot from his tractor 45 thirteen-lined spermophiles. All this happened when never a pledged protectionist was near to save his pet gopher or rattlesnake. Since the bearing of children went out of fashion, the small boy with his traps has faded from the landscape; because of this fact, taken together with the high cost of labor and the removal of the bounty on the woodchuck, this pest has been permitted to increase amazingly. Meanwhile the countryman remains tranquil, knowing full well that the closet conservationist, which is the city man, will be the first to die from starvation when his protected pets have destroyed all the crops.

This attempt at all-protection reaches its peak when certain of its persuasion become fiercely hostile if one says the House Wren is a menace or that the English Sparrow is unlovely; they can not endure to hear the truth told. A forceful example of this type was presented by a feeble-minded one, who ordered her bird magazine stopped because the editor had classed the English Sparrow "with noxious weeds, undesirable, vicious and altogether unwelcome."