

PUBLICATIONS REVIEWED

CORY AND HELLMAYR ON BIRDS OF THE AMERICAS.¹—In a preface by Dr. Wilfred H. Osgood, Curator, Department of Zoology, we are informed that manuscript for the present part of the series projected to cover the birds of all the Americas, was left at the death of Mr. Cory in an advanced stage of preparation, but that it has required considerable revision. In fact the original manuscript has been so revised and extended that responsibility for it rests entirely with Dr. Hellmayr. It needs but hasty comparison of the present work with the two preceding volumes to realize the amount of information that Dr. Hellmayr has added to the synonymy in addition to the full and abundant footnotes that appear over his initials.

The three families of mesomyodian perching birds here treated are wholly Neotropical, none of their species penetrating within the present limits of the A. O. U. Check-list. The volume constitutes a valuable and careful revision of these groups, of which the Formicariidae in particular form one of the most difficult families of birds. Treatment is in accordance with the scheme outlined by Cory. The accepted name for each form is followed by synonymy of important titles, the range, and a statement listing specimens found in the collection of the Field Museum. Frequent footnotes give the characters distinguishing various forms, discussion of specimens, notes on range or geographic variation, and measurements. These, taken with citations of published localities, based on Dr. Hellmayr's extended studies in the museums of Europe and of this country, constitute a mass of information of the greatest value to the worker in Neotropical birds.

Generic treatment on the whole is conservative; the Pteroptochidae are listed under 10 genera which cover 37 species and subspecies, the Conopophagidae have 2 genera for 20 species and subspecies, and the Formicariidae 55 genera for 509 species and subspecies. The latter group is divided into two subfamilies, the Formicariinae with 421 forms, and the Myrmotheriinae with 88. Many genera named in recent years are relegated to synonymy, only those that seem to have well-marked characters being accepted.

Subspecific relationship is assigned on broad lines, intergradation being assumed in many cases where it is not definitely known. Criticism of subsequent workers will probably bear strongly on this fact, as individual opinion varies as to what are valid specific and subspecific differences. As an example may be cited the case of *Thamnophilus gilvlgaster* and *T. caerulescens*, which with their races are all given as forms of *caerulescens*; though very closely allied, in the eye of the reviewer, the two groups are specifically distinct.

Through an unfortunate interchange in the key to families (p. 1) the form of the sternum is wrongly given, as it is four-notched in the Conopophagidae and Pteroptochidae, and two-notched in the others. Also (p. 2) the Phytotomidae have a crest which, though unlike that of the Rupicolidae, is very distinct. The genus *Rhoporchilus* Ridgway, given (p. 166) as a synonym of *Melanopareia* Reichenbach, is unquestionably distinct. The latter group as rightfully restricted belongs in another family, the Pteroptochidae. *Ramphocaenus* (p. 205) and *Microbates* are included in the Formicariidae with a footnote calling attention to Miller's claim of a separate family for them. As a matter of fact the Ramphocaenidae are an oscinine, not a tracheophone, group.

Generic synonyms are fairly complete, though in some cases emendations have been omitted and in others included. Under *Cymbilaimus* for example, we miss *Cymbilanius* Sclater, 1854, and *Cymbolæmus* Cabanis and Heine, 1859; while in *Formicarius* there is omitted *Myotthera* Spix, 1824, and *Myotthera* d'Orbigny and Lafresnaye, 1839. In many other cases such spellings are cited. Though sometimes useful, their omission is not of great importance.

In numerous species attempt has been made apparently to align races in geographic sequence so that one or more subspecies may be given ahead of what is usually considered the typical one,—that is, the one that bears a repetition of the specific name as its trinomial. This follows out a tendency seen in various recent distributional treatises where perhaps it may serve some purpose, though such practice in a monographic work jars on our sense of order, and may prove confusing.

The following are described as new (by Hellmayr): *Scytalopus latrans* (p. 11), *Thamnophilus unicolor grandior* (p. 84), *Thamnophilus punctatus leucogaster* (p. 94), *T. p. pelzelni* (p. 96), *Melanopareia*

¹ Catalogue of Birds of the Americas, Pteroptochidae, Conopophagidae, Formicariidae, by Charles B. Cory, Late Curator of Zoology, revised and continued by Charles E. Hellmayr, Associate Curator of Birds, Field Mus. Nat. Hist., zool. ser., vol. 13, pt. 3, Nov. 20, 1924, pp. i-viii, 1-369, 1 plate in color.

torquata rufescens (p. 167), *Sclateria naevia toddi* (p. 253), and *Phaenostictus mcleanmani pacificus* (p. 321). There is also a new genus, *Sipia*, instituted (p. 224) with *Pyriglena berlepschi* Hartert as type.

The entire volume shows great care in preparation and is practically free from typographical errors, an excellence that extends even to the multitude of Spanish and Portuguese place names. Investigations of literature and type specimens have led to a considerable number of changes in current concepts, but in each case only necessary shifts have been made, and action taken has been directed to avoid needless changes wherever possible. Dr. Hellmayr has produced a work of maximum worth, one that embodies a vast amount of research, and one that will be standard for many years.—ALEXANDER WETMORE, *National Zoological Park, Washington, D. C., March 5, 1925.*

MINUTES OF COOPER CLUB MEETINGS

SOUTHERN DIVISION

JANUARY.—The regular monthly meeting of the Southern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was held at the Southwest Museum, January 29, 1925, at 8 P. M. with an attendance of about fifty members and guests. President Wyman called the meeting to order. Minutes of the December meeting were read and approved, followed by the reading of the Northern Division minutes for December.

The following names were proposed for membership: Mrs. Helen P. Everhart, 99 S. Meredith, Pasadena, California, by J. Eugene Law; Arthur Goldfrank, 1107 S. Windsor Blvd., Los Angeles, by L. E. Wyman; Egbert R. Jones, Box 338 A, Ceres, California, by J. Eugene Law; Clifford Marburger, Denver, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, by J. Eugene Law; George Doveton Sprot, Cobble Hill, Vancouver Island, B. C., by J. Eugene Law.

Election of officers for the coming year was then in order. At the December meeting of the Club, the present officers were nominated. The chair called for other nominations and there being none, on motion of Dr. Miller, duly seconded, it was voted that the secretary be instructed to cast the ballot for the continuance of the present officers.

A communication from the Association for the Advancement of Science was read, requesting the appointment of two members to represent the Southern Division on

the Affiliation Committee soon to meet at San Francisco. Mr. Law's recommendation that the members appointed by the Northern Division be asked to also represent the Southern Division was seconded by Dr. Miller and duly carried.

Dr. Charles W. Townsend, of Boston, a well-known ornithologist, was a guest of the club, and told briefly of his recent trip through Arizona.

The main speaker of the evening was Dr. Loye Holmes Miller. In his talk, "Fossil Birds down to Date", he explained the connection of fossil birds with birds of the present and future. Various fossil-bearing beds in California were described and the species found in each locality mentioned. A splendid specimen of a fossil booby was shown, as well as some interesting photographs.

Adjourned.—ELLA H. ELLIS, *Secretary.*

FEBRUARY.—The Southern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club held its regular monthly meeting at the Los Angeles Museum, Exposition Park, Thursday, February 26, 1925, at 8 P. M. Members present were Misses Johnson and Potter; Mesdames Ellis, Everhart, Law, Warmer; Messrs. Allen, Appleton, Bishop, Chambers, Colburn, Johnson, Lamb, Law, Michener, Reis, Rich, Howard Robertson and J. McB. Robertson. Visitors were Misses Law and Marsh; Mesdames Bishop, Lamb, Law, McVitty and Reis; Messrs. Chambers and Webster. In the absence of Mr. Wyman, Dr. Bishop, as vice-president, called the meeting to order. Minutes of the January meeting were read and approved, followed by the reading of the January minutes of the Northern Division.

Applications for membership were as follows: Mrs. Gertrude Strong Achilles, Fountain Oaks, Morgan Hill, California, by W. Lee Chambers; Stuart Taylor Danforth, Laboratory of Ornithology, McGraw Hall, Ithaca, N. Y., by W. Lee Chambers; Geo. L. Davy, Antler, North Dakota, by W. Lee Chambers; William Jay, 12 Westview Ave., Mt. Airy, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, by W. A. Strong; H. N. Kennedy, 103 East Grand Blvd., Detroit, Michigan, by W. Lee Chambers; Harry C. Monk, Avoca Apts., Nashville, Tennessee, by W. Lee Chambers; Wallace Havelock Robb, Honorary Game Warden of Canada, 371 Aqueduct St., Montreal, Quebec, Canada, by W. Lee Chambers; Dr. Charles W. Townsend, 98 Pinckney St., Boston, Massachusetts, by Donald R. Dickey; Frederick S. Webster, 114 South Bonnie Brae, Los Angeles, California, by Albert E. Colburn.