

As a matter of fact mouse plagues as well as a swarming abundance of other rodents, rabbits, voles, lemmings, etc., may occur almost anywhere and are probably the result of some special abundance of food coupled with a freedom from disease for a number of consecutive years. Then disease comes and the species is all but exterminated. Such irruptions of rodents have been recorded in history from the earliest times, centuries before the decrease of raptorial birds and mammals.

In the subarctic regions the periods of abundance and scarcity in such rodents as voles, lemmings and hares is cyclic in spite of the abundance of their natural enemies. The wonderful work of the Biological Survey has shown how rodents may be controlled, even to the point of extermination over wide areas. In time they will be able to cope with any outbreak; let us help their efforts in every way and not place undue trust in the feeble domination of the natural enemies of rodents. In time, when bacterial inoculation may be the means employed to reduce rodents the abundance of hawks and owls may be distinctly harmful, as the infected mammals which should be spreading disease would be the easiest victims to predatory birds and mammals.—ALLAN BROOKS, *Okanagan Landing, B. C., July 10, 1927.*

EDITORIAL NOTES AND NEWS

A most worthy undertaking is that just launched by the United States Biological Survey, to obtain a monthly census of water-fowl at selected points throughout North America. Doctor Oberholser is in immediate charge of this activity, and these auspices guarantee an energetic, well-organized effort toward a definite object. Too long has dependence in the formulating of game laws been left to hearsay, to the testimony of the casual sportsman, and to mere impression on the part of the better informed. Now, we are in line to get accurate, quantitative data—if Dr. Oberholser can be given adequate support by numerous good field observers who are in proper geographic locations. We recall as a fine type of such observation, Kibbe's study of the ducks on Lake Merritt, Oakland, as published in the *CONDOR* for March, 1925. Details of this new plan to obtain a nation-wide census of ducks and other water-fowl can be obtained by addressing Dr. H. C. Oberholser, Biological Survey, Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. Let Cooper Club members aid him to the full extent that individual circumstances permit. Accurate knowledge of the numbers, distribution, and migration of our important game species is an absolute prerequisite to any proper move toward the conservation of this valuable national asset.

It should go without saying that the pages of the *CONDOR* are freely open for discussion on both sides of any ornithological question. Such discussion can be vigorous without, of course, verging at all on the personal. For example, in the present issue we (editorially) welcome Major Brooks' plain expression of his views on mouse plagues versus hawks—this despite the fact that "we" (the Editor personally) dissent from his statements and conclusions in just eight different points, by count! This is a two-sided question, and we urge that such of our readers as have definite evidence or logical opinion to offer, on whichever side these bear, contribute their offerings to our "field and study" department.

MINUTES OF COOPER CLUB MEETINGS

NORTHERN DIVISION

JUNE.—The regular monthly meeting of the Northern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was held at the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Thursday, June 23, at 8:00 p. m. In the absence of president and vice-president, the Club requested Mr.