

article (pp. 659-691) by the well-known British ornithologist, Mr. H. G. Alexander, in which is given evidence which would seem with finality to dispose of the longtime story of Italy's poverty of bird life. Mr. Alexander implies that many of the general statements in the English language are, putting it mildly, "not wholly accurate." During a period of observation in the restricted Rome Province, Mr. Alexander's brother, the late C. J. Alexander, recorded "227 species alive"; "in some parts of the province birds of many species were found by him to be decidedly abundant. In a day's walk in the hills, either in summer or winter, he frequently saw over 40 species At the times of migration, especially in spring, he observed between 70 and 80 in a day, and over 90 in a week-end, at Fiumicino. And a good proportion of the small breeding-birds were found in abundance." This is a better score than we are usually able to make here in west-central California! Mr. Alexander says further, and on obviously sound ecological basis, that any scarcity of birds in Italy, locally, is due to methods of agriculture as "also in part to the lack of water during the late summer, and not entirely to the indiscriminate slaughter of small birds." Thus, it appears, another of our cherished beliefs must go by the board. We must be ever on the alert against employment of unsound "evidence"—especially so when seeking argument for a pet reform, no matter how worthy in itself.

Bulletin No. 9, issued recently by the Board of Game Commissioners, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, contains some statements by Mr. George Miksch Sutton, Chief of Research and Information, which appealed to us as eminently sensible. He says: "Nothing is more distasteful to the scientist than a half-hearted or ignorant sentimentality such as sometimes exists among amateur students. . . . False sentimentality has no place in genuine bird-study. Such sentimentality regards a hawk which captures smaller birds as wicked, and forgets that the smaller birds cause just as much death, if not actually more, when they capture numerous small insects. . . . A careful study of Biology leads the scientist to believe that grief plays very little part in the lives of birds and mammals. . . . False sentimentality is the sort of thing which brands a boy morally bad because he wants to collect a

bird's egg. The truly broad-minded bird-lover realizes that it [this] is a normal predatory instinct His [the boy's] desire to collect specimens should not be thought bad or even undesirable. . . . I am heartily in sympathy with the young chap who wants to assemble some sort of a nature-study collection, and if properly advised and encouraged, the boy's experience with natural history objects may be among the most valuable developing factors in his life."

MINUTES OF COOPER CLUB MEETINGS

NORTHERN DIVISION

SEPTEMBER.—The September meeting of the Northern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was held in room 101, Zoology Building, University of California, Berkeley, on September 22, 1927, at 8:00 P. M. In the absence of president and vice-president, Mrs. Amelia S. Allen was asked to occupy the chair. Minutes of the Northern Division for August were read and approved. Minutes of the Southern Division for August were read. The following proposals for membership were made: Harold E. Hansen, 783 Market Street, San Francisco, Calif., by H. S. Swarth; Mrs. Robert French Leavens, 1900 Yosemite Road, Berkeley, Calif., by Mrs. A. S. Allen.

Mr. Jean Linsdale presented the following set of resolutions on the death of Louis Agassiz Fuertes.

Whereas, the untimely death by accident of Louis Agassiz Fuertes on August 21, 1927, has removed from the rolls of the Cooper Club one of its most eminent members, whose work is known and revered by all students of birds; then, be it

Resolved, that this Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club hereby place on record this statement of our grief that his brilliant career should be cut short; and, be it further

Resolved, that the Secretary be instructed to extend our sympathy at this time to the family of this, the greatest of American bird artists.

(Signed) Jean Linsdale
J. Grinnell
H. S. Swarth

These resolutions were unanimously adopted.

Mr. Swarth reported progress in the matter of collecting funds for a stone to be erected over the grave of Thomas Bridges.

When members were called upon for seasonal field notes, Mrs. Kelly reported that use of the Oakland air field by airplanes had not frightened away the shore birds which had formerly found it a convenient landing field. Mrs. Allen spoke of the sandpipers on the land about Dumbarton cut-off and of the finding of twenty

dead birds in the road, killed, as they foraged, by passing automobiles. Miss Mary Alexander reported increasing numbers of hillside birds frequenting the bird pool in her garden as the dry season advanced. Mr. Clabaugh told of a California Jay which he banded last November in Davis and which was shot this July in Berkeley. Mrs. Kibbe repeated two reports of interest which she had learned through Donald McLean—the noting of a Sabine Gull from the Key Route mole, and the capture of a rat crossing Telegraph Avenue, by a Barn Owl which dropped upon it.

The program of the evening was given by Mr. Joseph Grinnell who talked upon the bird-life of the Mt. Lassen region, with especial reference to the behavior of species during May and June. Adjourned.—HILDA W. GRINNELL, *Secretary*.

OCTOBER.—The regular monthly meeting of the Cooper Ornithological Club, Northern Division, was held in Room 101, Zoology Building, University of California, Berkeley, on October 27, 1927, at 8:00 P. M., with about 70 members in attendance. Vice-president Mailliard took the chair. Minutes of the Northern Division for September were read and approved. Minutes of the Southern Division for September were read. The following names were proposed for membership in the club: Alice Craig, 2550 Ellsworth St., Berkeley, Calif., by Edna M. Fisher; Herman de Fremery, Box 25, Berkeley, Calif., by J. Grinnell; E. Beryl Kautz, 2636 Dwight Way, Berkeley, Calif., by Margaret W. Wythe; Mary G. MacAleer, 68 Post St., San Francisco, Calif., by Mrs. Junea W. Kelly; Robert D. Moore, 744 Walnut Ave., Redlands, Calif., by E. W. Nelson.

Mr. H. S. Swarth reported that his committee, appointed to collect funds for purchasing a granite tablet to mark the grave of Thomas Bridges in Laurel Hill Cemetery, San Francisco, had completed its work. He requested that the committee be discharged. The chairman accepted the report, discharged the committee, and requested the secretary to turn over to the Business Manager of the Cooper Club the small unexpended balance remaining from the funds collected. Mr. Swarth stated that the custodian of the cemetery maintains a small aviary which shelters, among other birds, a Lazuli Bunting which has lived in captivity for eight years.

Dr. B. W. Evermann stated that when

crossing Dumbarton bridge recently he had seen some Northern Phalaropes and thousands of Pipits. The Pipits rose from the bridge and adjacent roadway with the passing of machines and then settled again as though feeding. W. O. Emerson suggested that probably the birds were feeding on bits of clam shell for the sake of the adhering salt. Brighton C. Cain reported the presence of an albino Sparrow in Lakeside Park, Oakland, and Mr. Mailliard added that an albino Ruddy Duck has been seen on Spreckels Lake in Golden Gate Park.

The speaker of the evening was Dr. Wm. E. Ritter who has for several years made a study of the habits of the California Woodpecker. Dr. Ritter told of many interesting facts gathered from his own observations and from information contributed by other Cooper Club members. Dr. Ritter's talk was of value, not only because of the information given, but also because of the unsolved problems presented, stimulative of further study of this most interesting species. Among the members who offered comments upon the co-terminous distribution of California Woodpeckers and oaks was Dr. E. W. Nelson, whose presence was welcomed by all who had the privilege of hearing and, later, of meeting him. Adjourned.—HILDA W. GRINNELL, *Secretary*.

SOUTHERN DIVISION

SEPTEMBER.—The September meeting of the Southern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was called to order by President Appleton on September 27, 1927, at 8:10 P. M. at the Los Angeles Museum, Exposition Park, Los Angeles. About 45 members and friends were present. The minutes of the August meeting of the Southern Division were read and approved. The minutes of the August meeting of the Northern Division were read.

The following names were proposed for membership: Walter L. Burke, 505 East 6th St., Vinton, Iowa, by J. Grinnell; Edwin Komarek, care The Chicago Academy of Sciences, Lincoln Park, Chicago, by Alfred M. Bailey; Harley W. Barton, Kodiak, Alaska, by Harold Michener; John Stuart Rowley, 403 South First St., Alhambra, Calif., by O. W. Howard; Frank H. Letl, Sublette, Illinois, and Mrs. W. U. S. Thorne, 810 5th Ave., Newport, N. Y., both by W. Lee Chambers.

A circular letter from William E. Ritter, University of California, was read

in which he states that he will greatly appreciate the cooperation of the members of the Cooper Club in answering questions concerning the food habits of the California Woodpecker. A list of questions was attached to the letter.

Mr. A. J. van Rossem was the speaker of the evening. He showed an interesting group of slides and told of his collecting work in Salvador. A general discussion followed his talk.

Dr. Loye Miller read a paper entitled "The Antiquity of the Migratory Instinct of Birds". In it he presents the idea that the migratory instinct is of greater antiquity than the Glacial Period and cites some facts gained from fossil birds to substantiate this speculation.

Dr. Miller also told of seeing recently many shore birds and water birds at Point Mugu, near Hueneme, Ventura County, California. Mrs. Schneider reported seeing in late August, at Playa del Rey, two adults and one young of the Caspian Tern. Dr. Miller said both adult and young of this species were seen during September at Point Mugu. It was pointed out that Mr. Huey had found the Caspian Tern breeding at Scammons Lagoon in Lower California. Several present reported having seen White Egrets at Westlake Park, Los Angeles. Adjourned.—HAROLD MICHENER, *Secretary*.

OCTOBER.—The October meeting of the Cooper Ornithological Club, Southern Division, was called to order by Vice-president Chambers at 8:15 P. M., October 25, 1927, at the Los Angeles Museum, Exposition Park, Los Angeles. About 50 members and friends were present. The minutes of the September meeting of the Southern Division were read and approved. The minutes of the September meeting of the Northern Division were read by title only.

The following names were proposed for membership: John van Schaick, Jr., 176 Newbury St., Boston, Mass.; Dr. Amon Robert Shearer, Mont Belvieu, Chambers Co., Texas; Rex R. Benson, Ancon, Canal Zone; Francis M. Uhler, U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, Bureau of Biological Survey, Washington, D. C.; Bayard H. Christy, 403 Frederick Ave., Sewickley, Pa. [all these by W. Lee Chambers]; James Johnston Bulnes, 1217½ S. Serrano Ave., Los Angeles, Calif., by Louis B. Bishop; Ada Bell Maescher, 4652 Mascot St., Los Angeles, Calif., and Martha Burnham, 3129

Durand Drive, Hollywood, Calif., both by Harold Michener.

Mr. Chambers introduced the subject of the next annual meeting of the Club and asked Dr. Miller for information in regard to it. Dr. Miller explained that it is the general plan of the Cooper Club to have an annual meeting each spring, alternately in the southern part of the state and in the San Francisco Bay region, and that according to this plan the next annual meeting should be held in the southern part of the state next spring. Dr. Miller moved that the Southern Division extend an invitation to all the members of the Cooper Ornithological Club to meet with it in an annual meeting at Los Angeles next spring. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

Mr. Robert T. Moore, the speaker of the evening, told of a trip of several months duration, beginning last April, in which he was accompanied by Mrs. Moore and one of their sons, throughout much of Ecuador. The trip was mainly one of reconnaissance to determine the best procedure for future trips for the purpose of studying the life histories of the birds of that country, particularly the hummingbirds. A considerable number of specimens were collected, but no more of any species than were required for identification. There are in that country 148 species and subspecies of hummingbirds, and about 1500 of all birds, while the area of the country is only about half that of California. Specimens of about 100 species of hummingbirds were collected; and about 50 species were observed sufficiently to form an acquaintance with them. Nests of about 12 species of hummingbirds were found. There is a great variety of climatic conditions and probably two nesting seasons, one in April and May and another about November. The same species is very seldom found on both sides of the high mountain barrier. The party saw but one snake, and it was harmless, and were not bothered at all by insects, except in the port city of Guayaquil, even on the headwaters of the Amazon as low as 2000 feet elevation.

Mr. Moore showed several reels of moving pictures of the country, its inhabitants, the party, and a few of the birds. He also displayed many specimens of the feathered jewels, from the size of a bumblebee up, which were being examined by all who could cluster around the table, long after the meeting was over. Adjourned.—HAROLD MICHENER, *Secretary*.