

## EDITORIAL NOTES AND NEWS

The third annual meeting of the Cooper Ornithological Club will be held in San Diego from Friday to Sunday, May 4, 5 and 6, under the auspices of the San Diego Society of Natural History. Headquarters of the meeting will be at the Society's Museum in Balboa Park. The local committee of arrangements, through its chairman, Clinton G. Abbott, urges all Cooper Club members to make immediate note of the dates and to attend the meeting if it is any way possible. A representation from the east is assured. The program of papers, both technical and popular, will be supplemented by an exhibition of original bird paintings and drawings by Allan Brooks. The San Diego Society of Natural History, which has been in existence since 1874, promises to have some of its treasures on display, including three specimens of the extinct Guadalupe Caracara. The San Diego region provides a wide choice of field-trip possibilities, both by land and water, and this feature of the meeting will be well taken care of. The bird-loving public, whether Club members or not, will be welcome to attend all these events.

Certain of our non-collecting friends are accustomed to casting aspersions upon the ethical code of the average collector, especially that of the collector of birds' eggs. We, personally, do not believe that the egg collector is any more prone to disregard ethical proprieties than the collector in any other natural history field. Now comes an experiment to the point. Miss Emily Smith, in her noteworthy article in the current issue of *THE CONDOR*, discloses the location, even to the exact nesting niches, of a "colony" of the rare Black Swift. These sites are readily accessible, and in a locality quickly reachable from a metropolis of collectors. Let us now see if Miss Smith's appeal against disturbance of the Swifts the coming nesting season be heeded. Obviously, only *CONDOR* readers will be in possession of the facts. We egg-collectors are on trial.—J. G.

It is gratifying, as we have remarked before, to note the increasing spread of book collecting as a recreation or hobby. There are probably ten ornithological libraries of fair size now to the one of

twenty years ago. However, the mere collector, who prizes first editions and rare bindings above all else, hasn't so much of our sympathy as the striving naturalist who wishes to have at arm's length a well-selected set of books for reference. Chief of these books will be bound volumes of periodicals; for among the articles published in our periodical literature are to be found the chief original and authoritative sources of current ornithological thought. Now the book-collector's notion is that only a *complete* set of a given periodical is of real value. Indeed, we have heard such an one declare that he would rather have no part of a given set until such time as he can obtain the entire set, including the usually exceedingly rare and costly early volumes. What we wish to emphasize here is that, from the standpoint of immediately useful ornithological knowledge, the later volumes in any series are worth far more than the earlier volumes in the same series. For example, there is no question that the later volumes of *THE CONDOR* and *The Auk* are vastly the more informative. In other words, for the serious student of birds, the incomplete set comprising the later volumes, the ones easiest to acquire, are of themselves eminently worth while possessing, *and reading*.—J. G.

### MINUTES OF COOPER CLUB MEETINGS

#### NORTHERN DIVISION

NOVEMBER.—The Northern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club held its November meeting in Room 101 Zoology Building, University of California, Berkeley, on November 22, 1927, at 8:00 p. m. Vice-president Mailliard occupied the chair and about sixty members were present. Minutes of the Northern Division for October were read and approved. Minutes of the Southern Division were read. The name of Mr. B. D. Dexter, 2519 Ashby Avenue, Berkeley, was proposed for membership by Mr. E. D. Clabaugh.

Mrs. Kibbe reported that on November 11, at Seabright, she had watched three Herring Gulls performing the seemingly impossible feat of swallowing starfish four inches in diameter. Mr. Mailliard reported the continued presence of the al-

bino Ruddy Duck at Spreckel's Lake. Mr. Clabaugh announced the banding of an immature Harris Sparrow, the identification having been verified at the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology by the comparison of the living bird with specimens in similar plumage.

The topic of the evening's discussion was "Bird-life in Nevada". The speakers were Adrey E. Borell, Jean M. Linsdale and E. Raymond Hall. Mr. Borell told of a six weeks field trip in the Ruby Mountains of Nevada in company of Mr. Ralph Ellis, Jr., and Mr. Raleigh Borell. Mr. Borell's talk concerned chiefly the birds of Ruby Lake, a shallow body of water 25 miles long, with islands and tule patches furnishing safe retreats for many kinds of water birds. From this camp sage flats, brushy canyons and rocky cliffs were accessible, giving the campers opportunity to study 105 species of birds of widely differing habitat preference.

Mr. Linsdale reported upon the birds of Fish Lake Valley, on the western edge of Nevada, where camps were established successively at three stations varying in elevation from 4900 feet to 7000 feet and where birds were seen from a desert environment up to high mountain conditions at 8200 feet. A total of 85 species was studied with especial reference to the ecologic conditions governing their distribution.

Mr. Hall spoke upon the birds of Pyramid Lake, where the largest colony of White Pelicans known in North America breeds. Other birds discussed by Mr. Hall were Cormorants, Canada Geese, American Mergansers, Coots, and California Gulls. A question which Mr. Hall left with his hearers was: "Why does a flying line of Pelicans appear every now and then to go over invisible hurdles in the air?"

After the meeting many members of the Club expressed to the speakers their appreciation of the opportunity which had been given them to learn in a single evening so much about the distribution of bird-life in Nevada. Adjourned.—HILDA W. GRINNELL, *Secretary*.

DECEMBER.—The Northern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club held its regular monthly meeting on December 22, 1927, at 8:00 p. m., in Room 101, Zoology Building, University of California, Berkeley. About fifty members were present. Vice-president Mailliard occupied the chair. Minutes of the Northern Division for November were read and approved; minutes of the Southern Division for November were read.

Applications for membership were as follows: J. P. Strohbeen, 15 Penn Avenue, Santa Cruz, California, and Mr. Melvin D. Wilder, P. O. Box 642, Santa Cruz, California, both proposed by Clark P. Streater. Nominations for officers for 1928 were as follows: President, Mr. Frank N. Bassett, nominated by Mr. Carriger, seconded by Mr. Hall; Vice-president, Mr. Ernest D. Clabaugh, nominated by Mr. Dixon, seconded by Mr. Dexter; Secretary, Mrs. Joseph Grinnell, nominated by Mrs. Allen.

Mr. Mailliard reported the presence of Ruddy Ducks, Canvas-backs, Ring-necks and one White-winged Scoter on lakes in Golden Gate Park. Mrs. Allen announced that Mrs. Blake had seen a Tanager in Berkeley on December 16. Mr. Harwell reported having seen a Valley Quail in Oakland at the County Courthouse. Mr. Cain had found Red-tailed Hawks plentiful and Golden-crowned Kinglets present at the Oakland Scout Camp. Mr. Bassett said that during eighteen years observation in Alameda he had never found the Bullock Oriole nesting until three years ago when a pair discovered the pool which he had constructed in his garden and since then they had nested just across the street. Mr. C. P. Smith reported that on the first Sunday in November while observing birds upon the marshes near Alviso he had come upon an Eastern Marsh Sparrow. The bird was perched upon a fence post and a close view of it through field glasses confirmed the opinion which Mr. Smith and his companion had formed at first glance.

Mr. Harwell read letters to and from Mrs. Bicknell in regard to the nomination of a State Bird. This being the topic of the evening's program the chairman called upon members to present their views. About fifteen responded with suggestions as to first and second choice. It was the sense of the meeting that, since the matter offers an unusual opportunity to interest school children in the study and protection of birds, the Northern Division of the Cooper Club recommend not a single bird but a list of birds, to be studied by those interested in a selection. Mr. Clabaugh moved that the Chair appoint a committee to draw up such a list. Mr. Harwell seconded the motion which was unanimously passed. Adjourned.—HILDA W. GRINNELL, *Secretary*.

#### SOUTHERN DIVISION

NOVEMBER.—The regular meeting of the Cooper Ornithological Club, Southern Di-

vision, was held at the Los Angeles Museum, Exposition Park, Los Angeles, on the evening of November 29, 1927, with President Appleton in the chair. About 40 members and friends were present. The minutes of the October meeting of the Southern Division were read and approved. Minutes of the October meeting of the Northern Division were read.

Dr. Miller moved an amendment to his motion of the October meeting as reported in those minutes, which would make it read, "that the Southern Division extend an invitation to all the members of the Cooper Ornithological Club to meet with it in an annual meeting in southern California next spring". This amendment was seconded and carried unanimously.

Dr. E. W. Nelson, until recently Chief of the Bureau of Biological Survey, was the speaker of the evening. He said he was back at work on the birds and mammals of Mexico, work which was interrupted by the executive duties placed upon him when he became Chief of the Biological Survey. He told of some of the things being done by this Bureau, by Mr. A. H. Howell on the birds of Florida, a work which probably will be completed soon; by Mr. Goldman on the birds of Arizona, for which the field work has been completed, but for which the date of publication cannot now be determined; by Mr. Oberholser on the birds of Texas, a work farther from completion than the other two.

Dr. Nelson also spoke of the depletion of wild fowl, particularly ducks, due partially to alkali poisoning at such places as the Bear River marshes near Salt Lake, Utah, where not only the water fowl, but wrens, blackbirds, and many other birds perish in large numbers, and partially to the destruction of their winter feeding grounds, shooting and other causes. The Biological Survey, with the aid of the sportsmen in the San Francisco Bay region who raised over \$7000 for the work, is making a study of the extent of alkali poisoning and of what can be done to better the present condition. In response to a question from Mr. Wyman, Dr. Nelson stated that there was a surprisingly strong flight of ducks reported early this season, both in Utah and in California, but since that time they have been very scarce.

Mr. Wright M. Pierce commented on the scarcity, almost total absence, of ducks this season at Bear Lake and Baldwin Lake, in the San Bernardino Moun-

tains, and that the hunters, not finding ducks, are shooting every kind of bird that flies, many of which he found lying dead on the shores of the lakes. Mr. Wyman reported similar observations at Una Lake, beside the highway just south of Palmdale, California.

Mr. Wyman spoke of the movement to choose a state bird for California and reminded those present that Dr. Grinnell had asked for a postal card vote from all Cooper Club members. After some discussion on the subject, Mr. Willett said that it appeared to him that the first bird to get two votes will be chosen! Adjourned.—HAROLD MICHENER, *Secretary*.

DECEMBER.—The Cooper Ornithological Club, Southern Division, held its regular meeting at the Los Angeles Museum, Exposition Park, Los Angeles, on the evening of December 27, 1927, at 8 p. m., with Mr. Appleton presiding. About 16 members and friends were present. The minutes of the November meeting of the Southern Division were read and approved. The minutes of the November meeting of the Northern Division were read.

The following applications for membership were read: Robert D. Camp, Brownsville, Texas; Harold C. Wilson, Ephraim, Wisconsin; John Kern Strecker, Baylor University, Waco, Texas; Gayle B. Pickwell, State Teachers College, San Jose, California; Charles de Forest Pettit, 225 Bush Street, San Francisco, California: all these by W. Lee Chambers; Edward L. Faufel, 628 S. Broadway, Los Angeles, and Lee Bernard McConville, 1620 Marengo Ave., South Pasadena, California, by R. T. Moore; Joseph Lewis Cobb, 227 Harvard Ave., Claremont, California, by Wright M. Pierce; Mrs. Chas. C. Bell, Saratoga, California, by Geo. W. Lane; J. W. Clise, Jr., 605 Spring St., Seattle, Washington, by Harold Michener.

Mr. Chambers moved that a nominating committee be appointed with instructions to report nominations for officers of the Southern Division at the next meeting. The motion was seconded and carried. The President appointed Dr. Loye H. Miller, Mr. Howard Robertson and Mr. Donald R. Dickey as members of the nominating committee. There being no program prepared for the meeting, the evening was spent in a general discussion of birds, their relative abundance, their appearance, and their notes. Adjourned.—HAROLD MICHENER, *Secretary*.