

EDITORIAL NOTES AND NEWS

The membership list published in this issue of the *CONDOR* shows a total present enrollment of 895. Continued prosperity of the Cooper Ornithological Club is thus gratifyingly evident, insofar as wide interest in our field is concerned. Incidentally, we wish to acknowledge the service of Mr. Harry Harris in compiling this new and down-to-date roster, sure to be widely used as a directory of naturalists.

The thirtieth volume of *THE CONDOR* is now under way. When this current volume is completed, next December, the third ten-year group of volumes will likewise be concluded. The first two ten-year groups have been adequately indexed. The indexing of the third ten-year group will then be in order. The first ten-year index was done by the late Henry B. Kaeding. The second ten-year index was done by John R. Pemberton. Who will volunteer to "do" the third ten-year index?

In last November *CONDOR*, by suggestion of our fellow member, Mrs. F. T. Bicknell, of Los Angeles, we called for a straw vote toward selection of a State Bird. This idea proved catching; and, because now a considerable number of organizations outside the Cooper Club have taken up the matter, we consider it out of our hands. This is, doubtless, as it should be; for a State Bird must meet the ideals of the bird-loving public at large, not alone those of the more or less specialized ornithologist. However, our call brought a considerable number of votes, with accompanying arguments. A total of fourteen species was designated, as follows, the first five in the order of number of votes received: California Valley Quail, California Condor, Wren-tit, Western Bluebird, Western Meadowlark, Western Tanager, Mountain Bluebird, Anna Hummingbird, Red-shafted Flicker, Yellow-billed Magpie, Steller Jay, Bullock Oriole, California Bush-tit, Goldfinch (no single species).

Perhaps the most interesting argument, and one accompanying nomination of a species designated but once, is that of Miss Julia Harbison, of Vacaville, who says: "If California is to have a State bird, I propose the Yellow-billed Magpie, first, because it is peculiar to the state; second, because, while one cannot say it is commonly met with, it is commonly recognized *when* met with; third, nature made him a poster; and fourth, if he is

doomed to extinction because he makes such a good target, let him live in our annals, at least. A member of the University of California faculty once said to me, in another connection of course, 'Sometimes publicity works *for* you and sometimes *against* you.' If the publicity the bird would get by being officially named would help to save it, that would be the best reason for selecting it. If publicity would hasten its end, the Yellow-billed Magpie is not to be considered. At any rate, such matters as this cause one to get out his bird books and brush up, even though the result may be a proposition that could never be popular. I have never, as you know, seen a magpie in the Vacaville region."

To sum up, our straw vote shows that the final, official selection, to be announced from the state committee which we are informed has been set up, representing numerous organizations, will likely be the California Valley Quail.—J. G.

On January 12, 1928, occurred the death of Leverett Mills Loomis at the Stanford Hospital, San Francisco. Mr. Loomis was not an old man, having passed his seventieth birthday only a few weeks before (on October 13, 1927), but he had been in poor health for some years, and a series of lesser illnesses proved too hard a strain upon a weakened heart. Mr. Loomis left his imprint upon the ornithology of the Pacific coast by reason of several outstanding achievements, such as the series of papers upon the water birds of the Monterey region, written while he was curator of the department of ornithology in the California Academy of Sciences, the organization of the successful expedition sent to the Galapagos Islands in 1905-06 by the same institution while he was director thereof, and his work upon the Tubinares during his later years. At the time of his death he had all but completed a monograph of this difficult group of birds.

Mr. Loomis was an accomplished and exceedingly thorough student of ornithology, and one who could forcefully defend his views and theories. In his later years he was out of sympathy with most workers in the same field and withdrew more and more from outside contacts. He was thoroughly convinced of the utter fallacy of the widely accepted concept of subspecies, upon which so much modern work is based, and this, among other things,

led him to continue his studies almost alone. So, to the later generation, such as comprises so large a proportion of the attendance of Cooper Club meetings, he was personally all but unknown. Upon those of us who can appreciate the values in his researches is laid the responsibility of seeing that he receives the credit that is his due for the labors he accomplished.—H. S. S.

We recently saw the reproduction of a drawing in a popular bird magazine with legend: "The Prairie Falcons of Pyramid Lake". In the talons of one of the birds is depicted a Gambel Quail. But, as far as known to ornithology, the Gambel Quail does not exist, wild, anywhere nearly so far north in Nevada as Pyramid Lake. The association of locality, prey and captor as implied in the legend is thus contrary to fact. The artist who originally painted the really splendid portrait of the hawks had the highest regard for accuracy; and we happen to know that he never intended the mis-information now implied.—J. G.

The personnel of the recently instituted "Game Refuge and Public Shooting Grounds Advisory Committee of California" has been announced by Governor C. C. Young. Dr. Barton Warren Evermann, Director of the California Academy of Sciences, and Dr. K. F. Meyer, Director of Hooper Foundation for Medical Research of the University of California, become members, *ex officio*. The others, appointed by the Fish and Game Commissioners, with the approval of the Governor, are H. L. Betten, Alameda, Jacob Baum, Los Angeles, J. Dale Gentry, San Bernardino, and Manley S. Harris and Nathan Moran, both of San Francisco. The function of the committee is to make a survey of the state for the purpose of ascertaining the needs for game refuges and public shooting grounds, thus supplying data to be used by the Fish and Game Commission in the acquisition of desired areas.—H. S. S.

The latest announcements from the California Fish and Game Division, coming through the daily press, indicate the following activities seriously affecting the bird life of the state. (1) Where, within the state, quail have become overly numerous and a "menace" to the farmer, the birds are being trapped by deputies and transported, irrespective of subspecies

or species, to other sections of California where the native stock has diminished. (2) "Wild" Turkeys are again being brought in for liberation, this time from Arizona whence, we are informed, "most of the domestic stock" has been derived. (3) Ring-necked Pheasants and Hungarian Partridges are being reared at the State Game Farm, for liberation in "our wonderful mountains and our glorious valleys," where, we are assured, "there is plenty of feed and spacious breeding grounds for all forms of wild bird and animal life." (4) A shipment of South American Tinamous, of three different "sizes," has just been received, for planting in various parts of the state, thus "adding to our game resources." Apparently, the principle being followed, despite sound biological ground against such procedure, is as follows: The California Fish and Game administration receives its support from the sportsman; "practical" ways must be found of showing immediate returns; fertile-minded but biologically uninformed persons urge the above various lines of action and the sportsmen of the state are fully instructed as to these and the theoretically attractive results to be expected; the sportsman "demands" that the Fish and Game administration proceed on these lines; said administration does so. The circle is complete; and our unique native game birds are exposed unwittingly to the danger of supplantation by foreigners at a time when all sorts of hazards inevitably accompanying close settlement of the country by the white man are rapidly reducing the food and shelter necessary for their existence. Is it realized that our proposed State Bird, the beautiful California Valley Quail, is, in effect, likely to be driven to the wall by alien competition?—J. G.

COMMUNICATIONS

CORMORANTS IN RELATION TO FISHERIES
Editor THE CONDOR:

There is an error in calculation in the third paragraph on page 184 of the current (1927) volume of THE CONDOR in the article by Mr. Arthur H. E. Mattingley on "Cormorants in Relation to Fisheries": While I have been reluctant to draw attention to it, yet, as it is being quoted approvingly in various quarters, and as the results that it provides may conceivably be adopted for use in various ways in the future, perhaps some action should be taken to prevent the