

more were heard chattering in the recesses of the fissure. Mr. Swarth told of watching a Wilson Snipe at Port Rupert and stated that the bird allowed him to approach within four feet, as it stood with eyes almost shut. Mr. E. L. Sumner, Sr., reported baiting banding traps in Strawberry Canyon with hulled barley in place of the chick-feed usually used, in order to determine whether the birds had a preference for one or the other. Forty-one birds were caught in barley-baited traps during the time that forty-eight were caught in traps baited with chick-feed.

The topic of the evening was "Urgent Problems in Bird Protection" and Mr. John G. Tyler of Fresno opened the question with a motion that Mr. Jean M. Linsdale's report [see below] on conservation be taken from the table where it was placed at the October meeting of the Northern Division by a vote of 9 to 6. The motion was duly seconded and passed. President Wright then read Mr. Linsdale's report and the report of the special committee, consisting of Mr. Follett and Mr. Cain, which was appointed to consider it. He then invited discussion of the report. During the hour which followed, discussion was participated in by Alden Miller, W. C. Jacobsen, T. T. McCabe, Paul Bunker, E. R. Hall, Donald McLean, B. W. Evermann, Joseph Dixon, Sumner Brooks and Ira Gabrielson. Mr. Grinnell then called for the question (adoption of the Linsdale report) and the Chair asked for a rising vote. Of the 125 persons present 61 voted, 52 in the affirmative and 9 in the negative. The Linsdale report is appended to these minutes.

Adjourned.—HILDA W. GRINNELL, *Secretary*.

REPORT ON CONSERVATION TO THE
NORTHERN DIVISION, COOPER
ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB,
SEPTEMBER 24, 1931

In 1929 the undersigned was asked to investigate problems of bird conservation in California, for the Northern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club. Two reports have been presented and have received the approval of the Club. The following brief outline is intended to be a further report upon one phase of the situation as it has developed recently.

The welfare of the bird life of California has had no more serious threat than that which accompanies the quickening movement on the part of agricultural

interests for the artificial "control" of all animals and plants which appear in any degree to interfere with, or even not to contribute to, immediate profits from the land. The phase of this movement which most concerns this Club is the imminent plan to destroy bird life, this in response to the complaints of farmers and fruit-growers.

The progress of farming has reached a point where there is no room left on the land for wild birds and mammals, if every bit of the available energy is to be turned to the production of crops. The question must be decided: Do we want the largest possible production of planted crops with no wild animals except those which persist as pests, or do we want a stabilized crop yield with allowance for the support of representatives of our native fauna? Study of all phases of this problem shows that the interests of the whole community would be served best if provision were made for the maintenance of a substantial portion of the native fauna on the land. The situation is not to be thought of in terms of but one season or even of a short series of years.

Several agencies are teaching and even forcing people to remove the native animals from their land. This is taking place against the wishes of a large proportion, possibly a majority, of the rural population. But the movement for "pest" control is rapidly reducing the number of persons who favor the presence of wild animals, and increasing the number who consider every plant and animal, not domesticated, to be a *pest*—to be removed, no matter how great the cost.

The use of poison to kill animals not wanted on the land provides so many opportunities for unnecessary drafts upon wild life that I believe it not justified in California to the extent it has been used within recent years or to the extent desired by a large proportion of agricultural workers.

In thinking of this problem it is necessary to keep in mind the characteristics of each of the three important uses that are being, or are likely to be, made of poison in the state. These are: (1) To poison rodents, chiefly the California Ground Squirrel; (2) to poison meat-eating mammals, chiefly the coyote; (3) to poison birds, chiefly the blackbirds and finches. Care should be taken not to confuse the conditions concerned in each. Statements made about one do not neces-

sarily apply to the others. They should be examined separately.

Our immediate concern is with the destruction of birds by poison. My enquiries thus far point to the placing of poison whether intended for birds or rodents on farmlands as the most serious of the preventable agencies which threaten the welfare of birds in general in California. The threat includes not only the direct losses in numbers of birds, which is perhaps least important, but the further disturbance of adjustments of native animals to conditions of cultivation, and the replacement of sentiment in favor of birds with a determined prejudice against them, which prejudice permits or abets their removal on slight pretexts.

The conditions outlined above bring me to recommend:

That the Northern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club reaffirm as one of its major objectives "the conservation of birds and wild-life in general, for the sake of the future."

That members of the Club in making effort to acquaint themselves with various phases of the pest control movement, take care that they seek information from unprejudiced sources.

That the Club urge the proper authorities to make a careful canvass of all the cultivated areas in California, to determine the extent of the supposed harm by birds—the crops, the birds, the seasons concerned. (This has not been done; nor as far as can be determined, is it contemplated. So far, the whole effort to control birds has been in response to complaints which, though numerous, represent only a small per cent of the whole area farmed in the state.)

That the Club urge that poison be not used to kill native wild birds, or, to the extent or manner practised within the past four years, to kill native wild mammals in California, and especially that no new projects be undertaken which involve the use of poison in the regulation of animal numbers.

JEAN M. LINSDALE.

DECEMBER.—The December meeting of the Northern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was held on December 17, 1931, at 8:00 p. m., in Room 2003, Life Sciences Building, Berkeley, with about 65 members and guests present. President

Wright occupied the Chair. Minutes of the Northern Division for November were read and approved. Minutes of the Southern Division for November were read. Miss Margaret Sumner, Kenwood Hall, 6367 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, California, was proposed for membership through the Western Bird-banding Association by Mr. E. L. Sumner, Senior.

Mr. Swarth, chairman of the committee appointed in November, read the following resolutions:

Whereas, In the death of our Honorary Member, J. Eugene Law, the Cooper Ornithological Club has lost a devoted adherent, one who for many years past has had the Club's welfare prominent in his thoughts and a prime object in his activities; and

Whereas, Our chosen study, of Ornithology, has similarly lost an ardent and accomplished follower, of whose past accomplishments we are proud and whose continued investigations would have redounded to the credit of the Club; and

Whereas, Our members, individually, are keenly conscious of personal loss in the departure of a valued friend and companion; therefore,

Be it resolved, That we record here our sense of sorrow at the loss we have sustained, and that we transmit to Mrs. Law a copy of these resolutions, as also our sympathy with her in the still deeper sorrow that is her portion.

The motion to adopt these resolutions was made by Mr. Swarth, duly seconded and unanimously carried.

A letter from Professor Luck, secretary of the Pacific Division of the American Association for the Advancement of Science was read. Professor Luck requested the presence of two delegates from the Northern Division at the meeting of the Affiliations Committee to be held in San Francisco on January 8, 1932. President Wright requested Dr. Evermann and Dr. Ritter to serve in this capacity and asked them to represent the Club as a whole, following a suggestion to this end from the Southern Division. The Chair announced the appointment of a committee to report nominations of officers for 1932 at the January meeting, the personnel being Mrs. Mead, Alden H. Miller, and Mrs. Allen, chairman.

An illustrated talk upon the "Life Cycle of the Water Ouzel" was then given by Mr. Bert Harwell of the Yosemite Museum. Mr. Harwell reported Ouzels as being present in all five life-zones of Yosemite Park and gave many interesting facts on nest-building, food, care of the young, and local distribution. His enthusiasm for the Ouzel met with a clearly apparent, sympathetic response from his audience.

Adjourned.—HILDA W. GRINNELL, *Secretary*.