

bird was named for Johann R. Forster of Germany, not "Doctor Foster" of Mother Goose! Vigors Wren is often written wrongly "Vigor's" Wren; this bird was named for the British ornithologist, Nicholas A. Vigors; if the possessive form be preferred, it should be spelled Vigors' or Vigors's. Samuels Song Sparrow was named for Emanuel Samuels of Boston, who in 1855 collected birds at Petaluma, California (see Palmer, *Condor*, vol. 30, 1928, p. 294); if the possessive form of his name be used, it should be written Samuels' or Samuels's, certainly not "Samuel's." Steller Jay is frequently written "Stellar" Jay; the species was named after Georg Wilhelm Steller, the first qualified naturalist to set foot on west-American ground; the word does not mean "pertaining to stars"! Savannah Sparrow is often rendered "Savanna" Sparrow; but it was given the name of the town, Savannah, Georgia, not that of a kind of grassland, the savanna; if a writer lower-case his vernacular names, he can only write, properly, Savannah sparrow. The Gambel (not "Gamble"! ) White-crowned Sparrow was, of course, named after William Gambel of Philadelphia; so with Gambel Quail and some other vertebrates. The plural of titmouse is most correctly titmouses, not "titmice."—J.G.

Students looking into the history of western ornithology will find decided interest in reading the "Autobiography | of | Isaac Jones Wistar | 1827-1905 | Half a Century in War and Peace" (Philadelphia, The Wistar Institute of Anatomy and Biology, 1937, pp. viii+528, 9 ills.). For example, herein one finds mention (pp. 42ff) of Gambel, for whom several of our Californian birds were named and who himself wrote the first good natural history accounts of some of our species. General Wistar says, quoting only here and there: "...In company with Dr. William Gambel, assistant curator of the Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences, a young naturalist and author already of some distinction, I started [from Philadelphia] at 11 P.M., April 5, 1849, on an expedition which led me during many years through much wild and precarious adventure, and directly or indirectly shaped all my future life and career." At Independence, Missouri, where westward expeditions outfitted, "Dr. Gambel had joined himself to five Virginians who with their one wagon and eight mules traveled with us." "June 2nd. [on the Platte River]. Made another march of twenty miles. Gambel being desirous of traveling more leisurely and comfortably, left us today and joined the large ox train led by Captain Boone of Kentucky, who is anxious to have him and will dispense with any aid from him in driving or working, in return for his medical services. We gave him a mule with his proportion of the tools and provi-

sions. He is an amiable, excellent fellow and very pleasant in conversation. . . . But he is averse to camp duty and hard work, and fond of taking things easy, and there is no doubt that Boone's large train with plenty of men and animals, and leisurely rate of traveling, will suit him better than our headlong methods, especially as he has formed a warm friendship with Boone." General Wistar says further: "I never saw Gambel after that separation, and may as well state here what I did not learn till long afterward. . . . Boone's train after losing many teams and wagons in the Humboldt River desert, arrived late in the season at the Sierra, where they encountered more obstacles and losses, reaching California after the beginning of the rains. Gambel personally made his way as far as Rose's bar on Feather River, where he died almost immediately from typhoid fever resulting from the extreme privations suffered during the latter part of his journey. Either Boone himself or some of his party, among whom Gambel was a great favorite, were with him at the time of his death." Dr. T. S. Palmer (*Condor*, vol. 30, 1928, p. 278) states that Gambel died at the place above indicated, "December 13, 1849, while attempting to cross the Sierra in mid-winter." The bird work for which we chiefly remember Gambel was done during his first stay in California, 1841 to about 1845.—J. G.

#### MINUTES OF COOPER CLUB MEETINGS

##### NORTHERN DIVISION

JANUARY.—The regular monthly meeting of the Northern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was held on Thursday, January 26, 1939, at 8:00 p.m., in Room 2503 Life Sciences Building, Berkeley, with President Emlen in the chair and 53 members and guests present. Minutes of the Northern Division for December were read and approved. Minutes of the Southern Division for November were read. Names proposed for membership were: Monroe D. Bryant, 1817 Oxford Street, Berkeley, by Frank Richardson, and Mrs. Georgia M. Miller, 655 Homer Avenue, Palo Alto, California, by Harry R. Painton.

The recording secretary reported that a letter had been sent to Mr. Fred Carlson, Fire Marshall of the city of Oakland, protesting the wholesale clearing of brush in lower Dimond Canyon, and that an answer had been received in the form of a telephone call from Mr. Carlson. He had explained that a portion of Dimond Canyon had been deeded over by the Bank of America to the city of Oakland for a park, and that clearing of brush was preparatory to planting of the area by the Park Department. Further plans of the Fire Prevention Bureau included the clearing of a fire trail, varying from 75 to 150 feet in width,

along the hills back of Oakland from the San Leandro line to the Berkeley line. After some discussion it was decided to defer any action by the Club until certain members had gathered definite information on the plans of the Park Department.

Mrs. Grinnell spoke of the great value of the Berkeley Aquatic Park for bird students, and recommended that members making observations there mail their lists to Mr. Charles W. Cresswell, City Hall, Berkeley, so that the real interest and appreciation of bird students might be made known to those responsible for the future development of the project. In this connection, Mrs. Grinnell reviewed W. L. McAtee's recent book, *Wild Fowl Food Plants*, which she had brought to Mr. Cresswell's attention.

Mrs. Grinnell also mentioned the addition of a large acreage of redwood forest, back of Mills College, to the Regional Parks, and suggested that the Cooper Club might add its influence in emphasizing the desirability of keeping the area in its natural condition. She moved that the incoming president appoint a committee of three members for one year, to handle all conservation matters which might come before the Club. (The motion was temporarily withdrawn, to permit the passage of a technical motion, relieving the old committee of its duties.) An amendment proposing to make the term of service of the committee concurrent with that of the president making the appointment was defeated, and the motion was carried in its original form.

As chairman of the nominating committee, Mr. Joseph Dixon took the chair and reported that the committee had decided to re-nominate the present officers to serve for another year. Election was held by show of hands and the report of the committee unanimously accepted. Upon resuming the chair, President Emlen expressed his appreciation at being able to serve the Club for another term. As conservation committee for the year, he appointed: Mr. Brighton C. Cain, Chairman; Mrs. G. Earle Kelly; and Mr. Elmer Aldrich.

The evening's program was devoted to winter field notes reported by members, and the number contributing was highly gratifying. Mr. McClintock opened with winter observations of several years ago, at Manzanillo on the west coast of Mexico. Certain general impressions remained as clear pictures which he set forth: The great numbers of sea birds in the harbor of Manzanillo, both on the water and soaring high above; exact details of the Brown Booby's method of fishing; an upstream wading trip where, amid the exotic jungle setting, with colored tropical birds, a Spotted Sandpiper suddenly appeared. Mr. Aldrich spoke briefly, also of Mexican experiences, mentioning especially the amaz-

ing tameness of raptorial birds, a condition which he attributed to the high cost of ammunition. Mr. Sibley reported the birding still good on Sears Point Road, in spite of the increased traffic due to removal of toll. His list included 3 Snowy Egrets, 8 White-fronted Geese, and a White-tailed Kite. His record of a male Barrow Golden-eye at the Berkeley Aquatic Park, January 22, gave further evidence of the park's value, and he urged that more attention be given it by observers.

Miss Rinehart reported the observing of an American Egret at Lake Merritt, January 16, and Mr. Covel finished the report with the assurance that the egret had finally found its way from the museum roof to a proper location within the sanctuary. Mr. Laidlaw Williams asked whether any of the color-banded gulls had been sighted in this region, giving some of his own records and urging alertness of all observers. His comprehensive observations on the Monterey peninsula included report of two species new to his lists for the region, an American Bittern November 17, and a California Clapper Rail at "El Estero" December 27 and January 9. Mrs. Kelly had seen a Bush-tit's nest at Alameda, already lined on January 12.

Mr. Alden H. Miller reported a species for which there are few records in Berkeley. Crossbills were seen in Strawberry Canyon December 27, and near Arlington Avenue January 22. Mr. Emlen noted the increase over last year of many common winter visitants to the Sacramento Valley, especially juncos and Lincoln Sparrows. At a point near Butte City where 240 Wood Ducks had been seen last year, they numbered around 200 again this year.

The club was privileged to hear an informal report of many of his latest observations by Mr. Ernest I. Dyer. Outstanding was his description of a blue color taken on by the crown and throat of the Anna Hummingbird after bathing. Through a thick film of water the feathers appeared normally red, when the film was first wiped off the effect was black, at a critical moment in drying the blue color was striking, and then the usual red returned. Experiments with a preserved hummingbird skin confirmed these details. Mr. Dyer suggested that since the color in the hummingbird's feathers is structural, resulting from diffraction effects, here would be a problem for some student interested in physics to undertake with the use of wet diffraction gratings.

Adjourned.—FRANCES CARTER, *Recording Secretary*.

FEBRUARY.—The regular monthly meeting of the Northern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was held on Thursday, February 23, 1939, at 8:00 p.m., in Room 2503 Life Sciences

Building, Berkeley, with President Emlen presiding and 48 members and guests present. Minutes of the Northern Division for January were read, corrected and approved. Minutes of the Southern Division were read by title only. Names proposed for membership were: Edwin Vance Miller, Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, by Alden H. Miller, and Robert R. Talmadge, 505 N Street, Eureka, California, by Robert T. Orr. Mr. Emlen announced that due to the University's Charter Day on March 23, the next meeting of the club would be held on March 16.

Dr. R. A. Falla of the Canterbury Museum of New Zealand was present, and President Emlen extended to him the welcome of the Club. Mr. Falla was making his first visit to the United States. He called attention to the remoteness of New Zealand from the scientific centers of North America and Europe and pointed out that practically our only ornithological contact is through the birds themselves, represented by such migrant species as Sooty Shearwaters, which visit us as well as the people "down under."

Mr. Alden H. Miller read a resolution expressing the deep sorrow of the Club at the loss of a most valued member, in the death of Ernest I. Dyer on February 4, 1939. (A copy of the resolution is filed with the minutes of this meeting.)

Mr. Cain reported that the conservation committee had interviewed Mr. Hyde, landscape architect of the Regional Parks, urging that native plants be left, in order to preserve the natural habitats of native birds. Mr. Hyde told the representatives that it was hoped that some of the park area would be left in a primitive condition. Mr. Aldrich will keep in touch with the Berkeley Aquatic Park officials and an attempt will be made to keep the park attractive to birds. Mr. Alden Miller reported on recent literature by calling attention to Charles Hellmayr's latest volume of the "Catalogue of Birds of the Americas." This volume deals mainly with the large family of fringillids.

Field notes were opened by Mr. Dexter, who reported a large number of Mountain Bluebirds in the Livermore Valley. Mr. Moffitt reported that Major Allan Brooks had collected two Knots at Morro Bay, January 15. When Mr. Moffitt visited Major Brooks there on January 27, Long-billed Curlew and Royal Terns were present in good numbers. Mr. Harry R. Painton described the coloring and behavior of an albino Robin which had been present on the Stanford campus for several days. Mr. Emlen reported a great influx of Robins at Davis, and Mrs. Dexter added that at Portland, Oregon, on February 8, she had seen large numbers of Robins feeding on red berries. Mr. Cain reported Rufous-crowned Sparrows on February 4 at Lake Temescal, an albino Spotted Towhee near Palo

Alto February 5, and on February 19 noted two Red-winged Blackbirds in the cattails at the small pool at the south end of the Berkeley Aquatic Park. On February 22 he observed 68 American Mergansers on San Leandro reservoir, all but four of them males. Mrs. Allen told of seeing 50 Green-winged Teal near Alvarado February 27. Miss Stedman reported Mockingbirds near her residence in Oakland, and Mr. Benson added that he often noted a mocker near Scenic Avenue and Rose Street in Berkeley. Mr. Sibley reported 73 Whistling Swans and about 5000 White-fronted Geese on Victoria Island, February 12. At Los Baños, February 13, notable records were of a Snowy Egret, 8 Gadwall, a flock of more than 40 White-faced Glossy Ibis and over 100 cranes. The interesting mating antics of the cranes were observed at close range. The ratio of subspecies was 4 Sandhill Cranes to one Little Brown Crane.

The speaker of the evening was Mr. James Moffitt, who presented, under the title of "Winter Birding in New England," an interesting comparison of two localities in the vicinity of Boston. Mr. Moffitt, in company with several well-known "bird-watchers," including Ludlow Griscom, visited on January 8, 1938, parts of Essex County to the north of Boston and, on January 9, Barnstable County, in southeastern Massachusetts, which contains the whole of Cape Cod. The biotic complexions of the two regions are quite different. The cold Labrador Current exerts its influence south to Cape Ann in Essex County, while the warm Gulf Stream is felt north to Cape Cod. The effects are reflected in the bird populations. At Cape Ann, boreal species find their southern limits, and at Cape Cod, many austral species reach their northern boundary. A comparison with California was made, not only of bird species, but of bird observers as well. Fewer birds winter in New England than in California, but amateur ornithologists there are much more numerous and, in Mr. Moffitt's opinion, more enthusiastic. As evidence, the Christmas census lists for the San Francisco Bay region and for Cape Cod were cited. The comparison was definitely in favor of the east.

Adjourned.—CHARLES SIBLEY, *Acting Secretary*.

#### SOUTHERN DIVISION

DECEMBER.—Due to the Christmas holidays, the regular December meeting of the Southern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was postponed one week, being held at the Los Angeles Museum on Tuesday, January 3, 1939, at 8 p.m. President McCoy was in the chair, and about fifty members and guests were present.

The minutes of the Southern Division for November were read and approved. Five applica-

tions for membership were read, as follows: Julius H. Comby, 256 N. Walnut St., Pico, Calif., by Blanche Vignos; Keith L. Smart, Box 206, Indio, Calif., by Sherwin F. Wood; Perley C. Chadwick, 426 W. Olive Ave., Redlands, Calif., by Dr. Charles A. Warmer; and Donald Child Alexander, 18 Hurd St., Lowell, Mass., and J. M. Winran, Caulfield P.O., West Vancouver, B.C., Canada, both by W. Lee Chambers.

The Secretary reported the receipt of a letter from the Pacific Division of the American Association for the Advancement of Science announcing the next meeting at Stanford University, June 26 to July 1, 1939, and asking that if the Club as an affiliated society wishes to participate in the program it so notify the association before February 10. Mr. McCoy asked for comment and in the absence of such, suggested the matter be dropped.

Mr. Clinton G. Abbott reported that the San Diego Society of Natural History is starting a movement to make of the Buena Vista Lagune a bird sanctuary and is seeking support from other interested societies in the form of resolutions favoring the move. Mr. Howard Robertson moved that the Southern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club pass a resolution favoring the use of Buena Vista Lagune as a bird sanctuary and recommending the adoption of such ordinances by the county of San Diego as may be necessary to bring this about. The motion was passed with one dissenting vote, from Dr. Bishop.

Mr. Abbott was the speaker of the evening and talked on "Sixteen Years Experience with the Christmas Bird Census." His talk presented an interesting survey and history of the taking of this census, and some results derived from it, the most important of which being the information obtained on the matter of increase and decrease of species, following changes in certain areas and closed seasons on certain birds. Questions and discussion followed Mr. Abbott's talk.

Dr. Miller then brought up a matter of business concerning the meeting of the A.O.U. in Berkeley in June, 1939, and the possibility of dispensing with the regular annual meeting of the Cooper Club in order to devote the Club's energies to making the A.O.U. meeting a success. Dr. Miller moved that members of the Southern Division of the Club go on record as favoring vacating an annual meeting this year in favor of the A.O.U. Robert T. Moore seconded the motion. After some discussion the motion was unanimously carried. Mr. McCoy appointed the following members as a committee on nominations for the officers of the Southern Division for 1939: Mr. Howard Robertson, Mr. J. R. Pemberton, Mr. I. D. Nokes.

Adjourned.—HILDEGARDE HOWARD, *Secretary*.

JANUARY.—The regular meeting of the Southern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was held at the Los Angeles Museum, Exposition Park, on Tuesday, January 31, 1939, at 8 p.m., with Mr. McCoy presiding and about 75 members and guests attending. The minutes of the last meeting of the Southern Division were read and approved. Two applications for membership were read: R. L. Rudd, 404 N. Main St., Salinas, Calif., proposed by O. P. Silliman; Gilbert G. Benjamin, Jr., 2297 West 23rd St., Los Angeles, by Mrs. N. Edward Ayer.

The Secretary read a communication from Mr. Laidlaw Williams asking the cooperation of Cooper Club members in the matter of obtaining all the information possible concerning the White-tailed Kite. Mr. Williams is chairman of a committee which will undertake the organization of a plan for the conservation of these birds, the plan to be based upon as much knowledge as can be obtained regarding their habits, distribution, nesting localities, nesting dates, etc.—all information to be kept in strict confidence.

Other communications reported upon by the Secretary were: A letter from the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce, indicating a desire to have the members of the A.O.U. visit Los Angeles while in California; a letter from the Golden Gate Exposition inviting the Cooper Club to meet at Pacific House on the fair grounds; and an invitation to Cooper Club members from the American Wildlife Institute to attend their Fourth Annual Wildlife Conference in Detroit in February.

Mr. Howard Robertson reported upon the recommendations of the nominating committee for officers of the Southern Division for the ensuing year. The nominees were Sidney Peyton for President, Robert T. Moore for Vice-President, and Hildegard Howard for Secretary. No further nominations were forthcoming and the persons named were unanimously elected. Mr. McCoy then turned the meeting over to Mr. Peyton. Mr. Willett moved that a vote of appreciation be given the retiring officers. The motion was duly seconded and carried. Mr. Howard Robertson announced that at a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Cooper Club it was decided that no annual meeting of the Club will be held this spring. It will possibly be held in the fall, or will be held over until 1940.

The business of the evening being completed, Mr. Peyton introduced Mr. Ed N. Harrison, who presented four reels of moving pictures of bird life: Birds of the Sierras; Life History of the Barn Owl; Life History of the Least Tern (2 reels).

Adjourned.—HILDEGARDE HOWARD, *Secretary*.