

NOTES AND NEWS

For the careful work of preparing the roster appearing in this issue credit is due John McB. Robertson. Hilda W. Grinnell assisted in the checking of the list and in reading proof.

Under the leadership of Frank A. Pitelka and in conjunction with the Business Managers, a membership drive for the Club is soon to be initiated. Suggestions are welcomed as to means of drawing into the Club an even larger number of persons than now enjoy its privileges.

The passing of Selma Werner in June, 1944, was a loss of a personal friend to many Club members. Enthusiastic to an extreme, from the time of her first interest in birds in the early 'twenties, she was also helpful in a variety of ways in sustaining the activities of naturalists' organizations. Notably, she prepared the annual index for the Condor over a period of about 10 years.

PUBLICATIONS REVIEWED

"Alaska Bird Trails," by Herbert Brandt (Bird Research Foundation, Cleveland, Ohio, 1943: xviii + 464 pp., 40 pls. (12 col.), 21 text-figs.) certainly merits notice in the pages of the Condor, even though it has already been well reviewed in two American ornithological journals (Bent, Auk, 61, 1944:308-311; Sutton, Wilson Bull., 56, 1944:120-121).

As these reviewers have discussed taxonomic and nomenclatural features of the book, comment along those lines will be omitted here. The annotated list, which takes up more than a hundred pages in the latter part of the volume, is an excellent compilation of facts regarding distribution, migration, nidification, molt, etc.; it will be of much value to students of these and kindred subjects, and the careful record of specimens collected furnishes a great deal of important and definite information.

However, in the opinion of this reader, Mr. Brandt has served the dessert first. The earlier and greater part of the book, comprising the narrative of the expedition, and splendidly illustrated by paintings by Major Allan Brooks and E. R. Kalmbach, and by photos by Frank Dufresne, Olaus Murie and the author, is enthralling. This is a well written day-to-day account of happenings presented in such a graphic manner as to command the attention of the reader at the very beginning and to hold it until the last bird has faded out of the picture. It is doubtful that any real field ornithologist could read this narrative without becoming mentally one of the party on the fog- and wind-swept tundra of Hooper Bay.

The expedition was splendidly equipped, both as regards personnel and materiel. H. B. Conover, Frank Dufresne, Olaus Murie, Jack Warwick and the author were all experienced field men, and several of them were well accustomed to travel and existence in regions such as that traversed, which is, to speak mildly, inhospitable. This reader knows that the March-April trip by dog sled from Fairbanks to Hooper Bay, much of it in sub-zero temperatures, and the inclemency of the weather prevalent on the shores of Bering Sea must have been productive of considerable physical discomfort, but although these handicaps are casually mentioned from time to time, they are stressed much less than is usually customary in similar narratives. It is apparent that through careful planning, and with co-operation of the members of the party, all difficulties encountered were so handled that they affected the final success of the undertaking very slightly, if at all.

Hooper Bay, where the summer of 1924 was spent, is on the eastern coast of Bering Sea, between the mouths of the Yukon and Kuskokwim rivers, in the heart of one of the most notable water-fowl breeding grounds in the world. The arrival of the swarms of birds from the south and the dispersal of many of them over their tundra nesting grounds are vividly described. During the ensuing breeding season fourteen species of Anatidae, fifteen of shore birds, all three species of jaegers, and numerous representatives of other avian groups were found nesting. Downy young of the Emperor Goose and Black Turnstone were collected and figured for the first time. Carefully compiled, detailed notes on nidification, behavior on the nesting grounds, and description of eggs and young of many species whose breeding habits were previously imperfectly known constitute a very worthwhile contribution to the science of ornithology.

An impoverished group of Eskimos was found at Hooper Bay, living under very primitive conditions due largely to their isolation. The services of many of these people, particularly the women and children, were secured by payments of tea and tobacco, and they proved of great importance to the success of the expedition. Not only were the Eskimos valuable for their ability to locate nests, but some of them were taught to aid in preparation of specimens. The nests found by Eskimo helpers were not disturbed by them, but were marked for later inspection by the ornithologists, a method of procedure very necessary to scientific accuracy.

Congratulations are due to the planners and members of this expedition for its important ac-

complishments, and to the author of "Alaska Bird Trails" for a notable addition to ornithological literature.—G. WILLETT.

MINUTES OF COOPER CLUB MEETINGS SOUTHERN DIVISION

MARCH.—The regular monthly meeting of the Southern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was held on Tuesday, March 29, 1944, at 8:00 p.m. in Room 145, Allan Hancock Foundation, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, with President A. J. van Rossem in the chair, and sixteen members and guests present.

Mr. A. W. Elder of the Fish and Wildlife Service reported an investigation of damage to crops by ducks in Imperial Valley. Probably due to travel restrictions and shortage of ammunition there was a great increase in numbers of waterfowl in the winter of 1943-1944. On the Alamo River State Game Refuge alone, there were an estimated 223,000 ducks in January. Much of the crop damage was believed due to lack of natural food on and around the refuge. Baldpates were particularly damaging to lettuce, alfalfa, rice and other green crops.

In the attempt to lessen crop damage, the duck season was extended locally for two months. About 3000 hunters killed an estimated 7000 ducks. The killing of this comparatively small number of birds was probably less helpful than the scaring away of larger numbers by shooting.

S. D. Platford reported poisoning of red-wings officially sanctioned by Supervisors of Butte County. Allegedly they were damaging crops.

George Willett exhibited a deformed skull of a domestic mallard, taken from a bird which had on its head a large crest of feathers similar to those on its belly. The skull had an opening about three-fourths of an inch in diameter in the posterior part of the parietal, and a bony plate of similar size extending posteriorly from the lower left side of the opening. Although a considerable portion of the brain was without bony protection, the bird was in excellent physical condition when killed.

Adjourned.—C. HENNE, *Acting Secretary*.

APRIL.—The annual outdoor meeting of the Southern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was held Sunday, April 30, 1944, at the San Gabriel River Bird Sanctuary, east of Los Angeles. During the day, members enjoyed various field trips showing particular interest in the Cardinal which has been introduced into the area successfully.

After an afternoon picnic dinner, a business meeting was presided over by A. J. van Rossem. Minutes of the February and March meetings were read and approved. Minutes of the Northern Division for February were read by title. Applications for membership were read as follows:

Nelson David Hoy, 500 Sharon Ave., Sharon Hill, Pennsylvania; Emerson Stringham, Box 2172, Capitol Station, Austin, Texas; George Wagner, 546 Washington Ave., Palo Alto, California; and Roger Warren Powell, Lincoln Auto Court, Cheyenne, Wyoming, all proposed by W. Lee Chambers.

It was noted by Mr. van Rossem that the migration of Lutescent, Townsend, and Hermit warblers was taking place at the time of the meeting. Loye Miller reported Myrtle Warblers present regularly in West Los Angeles up to February 1. Mr. Walter I. Allen reported three Band-tailed Pigeon nests in use then on his estate in Altadena and stated he had found occupied nests every month of the year except December. One pair of White-winged Doves was noted near Indian Wells by Mr. and Mrs. Howard Davis on March 6, 1944. Mr. George Willett moved and it was duly voted to advise the Los Angeles Audubon Society of the Club's appreciation for their kindness and hospitality of the occasion.

Adjourned.—WALTER W. BENNETT, *Secretary*.

NORTHERN DIVISION

JUNE.—The regular monthly meeting of the Northern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was held on Thursday, June 22, 1944, at 8:00 p.m., in Room 2503, Life Sciences Building, University of California, Berkeley, Calif., with President Robert C. Miller in the chair and about 150 members and guests present. Minutes of the Northern Division were read and approved. The following proposals for membership were read: Mrs. James S. Cooper, 310 Howard Ave., Piedmont, Calif.; Edith Dyer Champion (Mrs. L. F.), 805 Indian Rock Ave., Berkeley 7, Calif.; and Leonard H. Day, 212 E Street, Davis, Calif., all by Hilda W. Grinnell; and Elizabeth H. Smith (Mrs. Wayne H.), Camp New Pass, Austin, Nevada, by Jean M. Linsdale.

Bert Harwell told of six pairs of Trumpeter Swans captured and later released in Oregon last fall. Mrs. Kelly reported Audubon Warblers, probably with young, at Ross, Marin County, on June 17.

The speaker of the evening, Dr. T. Eric Reynolds, Capt. M. C., U.S.N.R., gave an account of "Some Bird Observations in the Solomon and New Hebrides groups of islands." He named a number of ornithologists now in the southwest Pacific whom he has met. Following brief comments on the geography of these islands, Dr. Reynolds described the appearance and behavior of common species, interspersing his accounts with anecdotes of "birding" in war zones. At the close of the talk, study-skins of the birds collected by Dr. Reynolds on the islands were displayed.

Adjourned.—ALICE S. MULFORD, *Recording Secretary*.