NOTES AND NEWS

Austin L. Rand, formerly acting chief of the division of biology at the National Museum of Canada, has joined the staff of the Chicago Natural History Museum as Curator of Birds.

Donald S. Farner, Associate Editor of Bird-Banding, has left the University of Kansas to take a position in the department of biology at the University of Colorado.

George A. Bartholomew, Jr., who recently received his Ph.D. degree at Harvard University, has joined the staff of the University of California at Los Angeles as instructor. He is known to Pacific coast ornithologists particularly for his work on the behavior of cormorants.

Wilfred H. Osgood, one of the four founders of the Cooper Ornithological Club in 1893, died on June 20, 1947, at the age of 71. Although especially eminent in the field of mammalogy, Dr. Osgood was always a naturalist of broad interests and maintained a lively concern for birds and ornithological organizations such as the Cooper Club and the American Ornithologists' Union, of which he was a fellow. Fortunately he was able to attend some of the later meetings of the Board of Governors of the Club, to which he lent wise counsel and supplied many sidelights on early Club history.

Unclear handwriting on a photograph led to an unfortunate error in the last issue of the Condor (p. 133) in the printing of the name of Vice-admiral William Tennant (not Tebbant), President of the Royal Naval Bird Watching Society.

PUBLICATIONS REVIEWED

"Darwin's Finches" by David Lack (Cambridge University Press, x + 208 pp., 27 figs., 8 pls., frontis.) is a treatise on the Galapagos finches of the subfamily Geospizinae, with general consideration of the other birds and of the remainder of the biota of the Galapagos Islands from an evolutionary standpoint. It is at once important to relate this work to Lack's earlier report on these birds (Occas. Papers Calif. Acad. Sci., No. 21, 1945, vii + 158 pp., 26 figs., 4 pls.; review, Amer. Nat., 79, 1945:468-470) which was written in 1940. No new basic material or experiences with the finches enters into the later writing, but the objective of the recent book is distinctly different. It is a more general, didactic account, less a technical report, and hence is not fully documented by data and descriptions. The many new illustrations, diagrams and maps are valuable features and some new and useful statistical summarizations are incorporated; the basic statistics are in the earlier paper. But the true reason for the later work is the fact that, "unexpectedly, a reconsideration of the original material led to a marked change in viewpoint regarding competition between species and the beak differences between the finches . . . the development of these points provides one of the main themes of the book."

In the last few years Lack has become impressed with the idea of competition for food among closely related birds occupying the same habitat. The chance of two species being equally well adapted is negligible, and one of them should eliminate the other completely if they are thrown together. Two species with closely similar ecology can not live in the same region. These notions, it may be remarked, are very familiar to those acquainted with the writings and teachings of Joseph Grinnell in the 1920's and later.

The food habits of the closely related species of the subgenus *Geospiza* are no better known now than before. Snodgrass in 1902 showed that these species eat the same food in the main and often utilize identical material. However, large-billed forms were shown to eat certain large seeds not taken by smaller species. The proportions of the same food items which were taken were in some instances different. These divergences seemed insignificant to Snodgrass, and earlier to Lack also. Further thought has led to their emphasis. Moreover, Lack points out that "some of the finches are absent from outlying Galapagos islands; their food niches may then be filled by different [closely related] species, or one form may take foods which on the central islands are divided between two species; in both cases there are corresponding beak modifications."

The earlier view of Lack on speciation was in brief that (1) the species of Galapagos finches "probably originated mainly through geographically isolated races which later met and kept distinct;" (2) that differences between island forms of the same species are non-adaptive and due primarily to the random fixation of variability; (3) and that characters of closely related species, like those of subspecies, are non-adaptive except that bill characters serve in species recognition.

His later interpretation reemphasizes point 1. Random fixation of variability is still acknowledged but is of reduced importance. And there is added the contention that "adaptive and ecologic divergence probably arises at the subspecific level, though intensified after the forms have met in the same area" and have reacted as species. The meeting of two new species results "in subdivision of the food or habitat, and so to increased specialization."