

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 illustra-

tions, 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."

The earlier views on random fixation seemed sound to us. We do not regard the new interpretation as a complete contradiction; its added features are indeed acceptable. Where the balance of importance lies between random fixation and minor adaptive divergence in the Galapagos finches is not now fully determinable. The view that both processes are operative is sensible.

Throughout, Lack's "Darwin's Finches" is thought-provoking and worthwhile writing. It is not a full-scale review or compilation of material on avian speciation, but it is a broadly comparative discussion of this topic which it is imperative that all students of this subject digest.—ALDEN H. MILLER.

COOPER CLUB MEETINGS

ANNUAL MEETING

The Eighteenth Annual Meeting of the Cooper Ornithological Club was held in Los Angeles, California, on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, May 30, 31, and June 1, 1947. The well planned and worthwhile program arranged by a committee of the Southern Division contained the following papers:

May 30, morning session, C. V. Duff presiding. Experiments on Molt and Reproductive Cycles in Golden-crowned Sparrows, Alden H. Miller; The Penguinoid Flipper of the Lucas Auk, Loye Miller; Theoretical Implications Drawn from the Existence of Air Sacs in Proximity to the Testes in Birds, Raymond B. Cowles.

May 30, afternoon session, F. A. Pitelka presiding. A Ten-Year Record of Bird Occurrence on the Hastings Reservation, Jean M. Linsdale; Comparison of the Skeleton of White and Scarlet Ibises, Loye Miller; Malaria in Black-billed Magpies and Crows at Honey Lake, California, Carleton M. Herman; Relationship of Birds to Scrub Typhus Fever in Southeast Asia, Kenneth E. Stager; An Outline of Cactus Wren Behavior, Anders H. Anderson; Observations of Behavior in Captive Fulmars, Henry Kritzler.

May 31, morning session, symposium on Mexican ornithology, K. E. Stager, presiding. Vegetation Zones of Mexico, Starker Leopold; Distributional Problems in Northwestern Mexico, Frank A. Pitelka; Narrative Account of Field Work in Sonora in 1947, Adriaan J. van Rossem; Taxonomic Relationships of the Red-eyed Towhees of Mexico, Charles G. Sibley; Preparation of the Check-list of Mexican Birds, Robert T. Moore (read by title only).

May 31, afternoon session, C. V. Duff presiding. Observations on Cyclic Activity in Equatorial Birds, Alden H. Miller; Bird Migration in Arizona, Allan R. Phillips; Comments on Dowitchers, Genus *Limnodromus*, Frank A. Pitelka; Avian Aspects of Southern California's Shore in the Pleistocene, Hildegard Howard; Wild Ducks and Geese (California Division of Fish and Game Motion Picture in Color), H. C. Jackson.

On exhibit in the meeting hall was a collection of unpublished drawings and sketches of birds by the late Allan Brooks.

Following the session on Saturday, the members enjoyed the hospitality of the Los Angeles Museum at an informal tea and open house in the offices of the departments of ornithology and paleontology.

The annual banquet for members and guests was held at the Mayfair Hotel. Pictures of the Western Grebe and of Mississippi Valley waterfowl were shown. J. R. Pemberton, toastmaster, reviewed and embellished the scientific program of the preceding two days and showed motion pictures of Cooper Club members of the past decade.

On Sunday, June 1, a field trip was made to the San Gabriel Wildlife Sanctuary.

NORTHERN DIVISION

APRIL.—The regular meeting of the Northern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was held on April 24, 1947, in Room 2503, Life Sciences Building, University of California, Berkeley, with 100 members and guests present. Milton Hildebrand called the attention of the Club to pending legislation which would adversely affect the wildlife of the Olympic Peninsula and the Mount McKinley region. The Club went on record as opposed to modifications in the boundaries of the Olympic National Park and to predator control in Mount McKinley National Park.

Mr. Howell reported Calliope Hummingbirds at Nortonville on April 12. H. E. Child described the movements of White-throated Swifts on the Berkeley campus between March 26 and April 16.

The speaker of the evening, Dr. George D. Mallory, Jr., showed his colored slides of the birds of Midway Island.—CHARLES G. SIBLEY, *Secretary*.

MAY.—The regular meeting of the Northern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was held on Thursday, May 22, 1947, in Room 2503, Life Sciences Building, University of California, Berkeley, with 75 members and guests present. Proposals for membership were read as follows: F. R. Barnes, 4282 Maple Ave., Oakland 2, Calif., by Brighton C. Cain; J. Bruce Kimsey, 256 E. 1st Ave., Chico, Calif., by T. L. Rodgers; and William S. Heit, Fish and Game Dept., Texas A. and M. College, College Station, Texas, by Charles G. Sibley.

The first speaker of the evening, Dr. Robert C. Stebbins, reported on a recent trip to the Joshua Tree National Monument and the second speaker, Mr. Keith L. Dixon, presented a resume of his observations to date on the behavior of the Plain Titmouse.—CHARLES G. SIBLEY, *Secretary*.