

NOTES AND NEWS

Don R. Eckelberry has contributed a series of exceptionally instructive and artistic original drawings to illustrate his article on Mexican birds that appears in this issue.

Members may still make arrangements to attend the Twenty-fifth Annual Meeting of the Cooper Ornithological Society at Asilomar, Pacific Grove, California, April 21 to 23.

The valuable and extensive article on winter societies in juncos has been printed with the aid of a financial contribution from the author.

The work of the Treasurer of the Cooper Ornithological Society will be greatly lightened if members will send in their dues promptly upon receiving annual notices.

PUBLICATIONS REVIEWED

A HISTORY OF BIRDS. By James Fisher. Houghton Mifflin Company, London, Boston, 205 pp. November 9, 1954. \$3.75.

Among the British ornithologists of these days, Mr. Fisher is an excellent popular writer; that is to say that he can successfully give to the reading public in a pleasant and easily understood language a good idea of our scientific knowledge of birds as it now stands. The present work is a new and considerably improved version of his "Bird as Animals" (1939). During the last fourteen years the understanding of bird life has greatly increased and so has the experience of the author.

In his first three chapters he reviews the works of the principal bird historians of the manuscript age and of the printing age, both as students of British birds and of world-wide ornithology. The following eight chapters deal with systematics, geographical distribution, bird history, speciation, the numbers of birds, absolute and comparative, and changing populations. There is a good bibliography and a useful index.

On the whole, Mr. Fisher's treatment of the subject is sensible and satisfactory and we can recommend this work as an introduction to the study of birds. As the subtitle points out, it is a concise study of the development of birds and their relationship to man.—JEAN DELACOUR.

BIRD-RINGING, THE ART OF BIRD STUDY BY INDIVIDUAL MARKING. By R. M. Lockley and Rosemary Russell. Crosby Lockwood, London, viii + 119 pp., 55 figs. and 8 pls., with 17 halftones. Price, 9s. 6d.

Here is a small handbook useful to bird-banders and other students of birds faced with problems of marking birds. Details regarding materials and techniques are presented, not from the standpoint of bird-banding as an end in itself, but as an aid in study of life-history, migration, and homing. The topics of the five chapters are history, research values, techniques of handling and marking, techniques of trapping, and lastly advice on bands, records, and field equipment. There are three appendices. The first sets forth 50 questions which offer appropriate bases to start the novice in a serious life-history study by the ringing method; the second lists British bird observatories and describes their organization; and the third is a two-page bibliography of selected titles.

This description, brief though it is, should serve to recommend the book to all those making use of banding techniques. It is compact, well organized, and distinctly useful, particularly to beginners, but also to the more experienced who may be interested in a review of British practices.—FRANK A. PITELKA.

COOPER SOCIETY MEETINGS

NORTHERN DIVISION

NOVEMBER.—The monthly meeting of the Northern Division was held on November 4, 1954, at the University of California, Berkeley. Robert I. Bowman proposed Richard W. Russell for life membership and James D. Anderson for regular membership; both new members are associated with the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley.

President Reynolds urged the members of the Northern Division again to write to their senators and representatives regarding preservation of the national parks. Donald McLean noted that plans are being considered for the expansion of industrial lands onto portions of the Alviso marshes, in Santa Clara County, California. He suggested that the Cooper Society or other groups interested in conservation lease or pur-