

NOTES AND NEWS

At the scientific sessions of the Society in San Diego, the following papers were presented on Friday, April 17:

Autumnal Premigratory Fat Deposition in the White-crowned Sparrow in Central Alaska, by James R. King.

Reproductive Adaptations of Arizona Yellow-billed Cuckoos, by William J. Hamilton, III.

Numbers of Eggs Laid by Brown-headed Cowbirds, by Robert B. Payne.

Pigments of the Roseate Spoonbill, Scarlet Ibis, and Flamingo, by Denis L. Fox.

"The Parrots of California": a Status Report, by John William Hardy.

Antiphonal Duetting as Evidence for Auditory Reaction Time in *Brotogeris jugularis*, by Dennis M. Power.

Differential Response of the Two Species of Meadowlarks to Recorded Vocalizations, by Laszlo Szijj.

A Causational and Sound Spectrographic Study of the Cu Ca Cow Call of the California Quail, by H. Warrington Williams.

Hybridization between the Quail Genera *Lophortyx* and *Callipepla*, by Ralph J. Raitt.

Hybridization between Mourning and MacGillivray Warblers, by George W. Cox.

Variation in Insular Races of Flickers (*Colaptes auratus*), by Lester L. Short, Jr.

The Contributions of Area, Elevation, and Isolation to Insular Variation in Species Abundance, by Terrell H. Hamilton.

Agonistic Behavior of the American Goldfinch, by Ellen L. Coutlee.

Winter Activities of a Resident Population of Starlings, by Jon Planck.

Territorial Systems of Arctic Sandpipers, by Richard T. Holmes.

Observations on the Social Organization of a Purple Martin Colony, by George E. Chaniot and Larry L. Wolf.

On Saturday, April 18, the following papers were presented:

Polar Ecology: Predator and Prey, by Frank A. Pitelka and William J. Maher.

Sexual Dimorphism and Ecology in Woodpeckers, by Robert K. Selander.

Food of Nestling Yellow-headed Blackbirds at Rush Lake, British Columbia, by Gordon H. Orians.

The Value of Examining the Stomach Contents of Shore Birds, by Junea W. Kelly.

Bird Life of the Upper Colorado River Basin, by C. Lynn Hayward.

Composition and Affinities of Montane Avifaunas of Southern Nevada, by Ned K. Johnson.

Nesting Data of the Californian Avifauna, by Miklos D. F. Udvardy.

Some Physiological Properties of the Pectoral Musculature in Hummingbirds, by Robert C. Lasiewski.

Energetics and Cardiac Responses in the California Quail, by Alan H. Brush.

Development of Temperature Regulation in the Masked Booby, by George A. Bartholomew.

Behavior of the Galápagos Flightless Cormorant, by Alden H. Miller.

Nesting Habits of the Black Wheatear (*Oenanthe leucura*) in Spain, by Frank Richardson.

Jungle Fowl in Thailand and India, by Nicholas E. Collias and Elsie C. Collias.

A step in the investigation of migratory birds as potential disseminators of arboviruses was undertaken in March and April by a field and laboratory team from the Arbovirus Unit of the United States Public Health Service's Communicable Disease Center in Atlanta, Georgia. Working in British Honduras migrants were marked and released from March 14 to April 3, 1964. White feathers were attached to the backs of 1052 birds, predominantly Orchard Orioles, Catbirds, and Indigo Buntings.

On April 5, similar activity was initiated in the Delta Wildlife Refuge of Louisiana, where yellow feathers were used to mark 458 birds released.

One objective is to make as many observations and recoveries of these birds as possible. If you observe any, your finding, including all the usual data on location, date, habitat, weather, and so forth, should be reported to the Arbovirus Unit, Communicable Disease Center, Atlanta, Georgia 30333 (telephone 404 634-5131). More important, if you learn of the whereabouts of a residential marked bird which might be investigated, immediate notification will be appreciated.

PUBLICATIONS REVIEWED

THE BIRDS OF COLOMBIA AND ADJACENT AREAS OF SOUTH AND CENTRAL AMERICA. By R. Meyer de Schauensee. Illustrated by Earl L. Poole and George Miksch Sutton. Livingston Publishing Company, Narberth, Pennsylvania, published for the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadel-

phia, xvi + 427 pp., 20 plates, 12 in color, 87 figs., 1964; \$10.00.

This handbook on the birds of Colombia by de Schauensee fills a very great need, for it is the first undertaking of its kind on Colombian birds and it deals with a fascinating bird fauna, richer in number of species than that of any other country in the world. It is designed to describe the birds, aid in identification, and summarize their distribution both in Colombia and in general. Meyer de Schauensee for many years has made a specialty of the systematics and distribution of Colombian birds and his more detailed treatise entitled "The Birds of the Republic of Colombia" published from 1948 to 1952 in the journal "Caldasia" has been a standard and dependable reference covering taxonomy and range. The present handbook draws extensively on the earlier work (now out of print), updates it, and provides descriptions and many illustrations. When this reviewer began his own field work in Colombia in 1945 such a book would have been of great aid; indeed he would still find it to serve very effectively.

The plan of the volume is to characterize each family, non-technically, and to introduce the family group with a black and white drawing of a representative species. These drawings, almost all by Sutton, are excellent and effective, as one would expect from this distinguished artist who has met most of these groups of birds in life in tropical America. In each familial introduction is a condensed indication of the number of species found in Colombia, the number in South America, the total in all the Americas, and finally the number for the world. The total species of all families in Colombia is 1556, more than twice that occurring in North America north of México. The figures also show that the Colombian avifauna includes 56 per cent of the species of South America and 80 per cent of those of Middle America. Thus the coverage of the book spreads usefully to adjoining neotropical regions.

The introductions to the families in most instances provide what is termed an aid to identification. These are partial elimination keys that lead the reader to certain groups of similar species. These "aids" are of variable usefulness. In moderate-sized families of species with good contrasting marks they serve, but they are of little benefit in such admittedly difficult, large families as those comprising the hummingbirds and the flycatchers. De Schauensee's more extensive keys in his earlier work were better, although

more complex, and even then they were not always satisfactory. There is of course a necessary concession in any manual, such as the present one, to compactness and the choice was to curtail the original keys.

In the species accounts, English names are introduced for the species, a great gain over the earlier, confused English names for races which are eliminated. In the main the selections are good and have benefitted from coordination with the name reforms of Eugene Eisenmann. Subspecies are usually not separately described but their ranges within that of the species in Colombia are briefly indicated. Zonal occurrence and a very general designation of habitat are given. The latter usually is no more than the words "forest," "scrub," or "grassland." Even this meager information is worthwhile. It would be difficult to go much further because of the very limited amount of published information on habitat and the fact that the author himself has apparently never engaged in any substantial field work in Colombia.

The 20 plates by Poole are composites, and even though portraying 10 or more species each, they can cover only a fraction of the avifauna. They are helpful, although they leave much to be desired in fidelity of color and form and, in some groups, in appropriate postures and relative size—the latter a truly difficult problem to contend with in a group portrayal. The artist seems to have had most difficulty where his familiarity with the species is presumed to have been less, as in the spinetails and antbirds. For example, the only representative shown of the abundant spinetail genus *Synallaxis*, the species *brachyura*, is portrayed in a very unnatural pose and with incorrect head shape; it compares unfavorably with Eckelberry's earlier good rendition of this species (Condor, 62, 1960, opp. p. 413). One wonders also why a piculet on plate VIII seems to be posed on the ground.

The plan of the legends for the plates we find regrettable. These legends give the English name satisfactorily, but the scientific name is abbreviated and only the race name, the least important of all, is written out. As a consequence even a person with considerable knowledge of generic and species names but no grasp of the largely new set of English names, finds himself groping to place the bird and being forced to look up the written account. Contrarily the written account itself clearly features in its heading the generic and specific names.—ALDEN H. MILLER.