

## RECENT LITERATURE

**Der Vogelzug**, Vol. 3, No. 3, July, 1932. Drost and Desselberger open this number with an article on the migration of two species of *Phœnicurus*, the Redstarts of Europe. They find that so many data have now been collected by means of returns and reports of banded birds that it is possible to make definite statements concerning the migration of these two warblers. The ordinary Redstarts (*P. phœnicurus*) breeding in Germany all migrate in a southwesterly direction and occur in October and November in southern France, Spain, Portugal, and Morocco, while the Black Redstarts (*P. ochrurus*) nesting in Germany split up in their migration, some going to the same places as *P. phœnicurus*, others going southeast to Italy, Macedonia, Greece, and Egypt.

Schüz contributes an account of the activities of the Rossitten station from April, 1930, to March, 1932. These two years were the most productive in the history of the station. Thus, out of a total of 168,648 birds banded, by the station staff and coöperative workers since the beginning of the work in 1903, 79,867 were banded in the last two years. Out of a grand total of 7,234 return records since 1903, 3,564 were recorded in these two years. The years reported on witnessed material growth of the facilities and collections of the station as well.

Drost continues his series of papers on recognition marks for determining the sex and age of migrant birds (the first two papers in this series appeared in *Der Vogelzug*, Vol. 1, No. 4, and Vol. 2, No. 3). In this installment he deals with the Stone Chat (*Oenanthe œnanthe*), the two species of Redstarts (*Phœnicurus phœnicurus* and *P. ochrurus*), the Nightingales (*Luscinia megarhyncha* and *L. luscinia*), the Bluethroats (*Luscinia svecica* and its races), the Redbreast (*Erithacus rubecula*), the Accentor (*Prunella modularis*), the European House Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*) and the Dipper (*Cinclus cinclus*).

Quednau and Bahr write on the observations of bird migration on the high sea near the Rossitten sand-spit, particularly with reference to the main flight directions, which they found to be almost due east in March, and east and southeast in April. Schüz continues his summary of return records of birds banded in stations other than Rossitten.

Among the shorter articles are notes on the banding stations of Esthonia, by Härms; of Lithuania, by Domaniewski; of France, by Bourdelle; and of Iceland, by Gudmundsson.—H. F.

**The Birds of Minnesota.** By Thomas S. Roberts, M.D. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, Minn., 1932. It is extremely difficult, in the limited space allotted to a review of this type, to even attempt to do justice to such a fine piece of work as Dr. Roberts' "Birds of Minnesota." For six decades Dr. Roberts has studied the birds of his adopted State with an interest that has been unflinching, so that he has brought to the preparation of this book a knowledge of his special subject equalled by few ornithological writers. The many friends of Dr. Roberts will rejoice with him upon the completion of this fine piece of work, which calls for our unstinted praise.

The first volume contains "An Historical and Bibliographical Review of Ornithology in Minnesota," a section on the geography and climate of the State, a synopsis of its bird-life, chapters on conservation, bird-songs, and bird-banding, acknowledgments, general comment and explanations, and systematic accounts of all the birds of Minnesota, from loons through woodpeckers, followed by a series of forty-nine plates in full color. The

second volume completes the systematic accounts and contains, in addition to forty-one colored plates, a very valuable collection of "Keys and Descriptions" occupying some 276 pages, a bibliography and a general index. Each volume also includes an unnumbered frontispiece.

In the accounts of each species paragraphs are given to General Range, Minn. Range, Minn. Migration Dates, Minn., Nesting, Nests and Eggs, Food and Field Marks, and in many instances, as noted below, to Banding Returns and Recoveries. Then follows the delightfully written accounts of the habits and haunts of the birds, written with a sympathetic understanding and from a depth of knowledge possessed by few ornithologists.

The ninety-two colored plates are an outstanding feature of the two volumes. Printed by the offset process, which gives them a pleasing softness of effect, they are the work not of one but of six bird artists. The late Louis Agassiz Fuertes is represented by one plate, a flock of Bobwhites in full flight. Allan Brooks contributed the two frontispieces of the Wood Duck and Ruby-throated Hummingbird respectively, and some 34 other plates; the remainder are by Weber, Breckenridge, Sutton and Jacques. In addition to the colored plates there are over six hundred text figures, from photographs by Dr. Roberts and others, and from line drawings by Walter J. Breckenridge.

It seems a little strange not to find detailed descriptions of the various plumages of a species in the systematic account of that species, but we must turn to the second volume, to the section on "Keys and Descriptions," for this information. And, after all, is not that the logical place for it? Certainly the amateur bird student will turn to the wealth of illustrations for aid in identifying a newly observed species, and will then refer to the story of the bird's habits and habitat, while the more serious collector will york out the identification of his specimen by means of the keys and detailed descriptions.

For the first time, I believe, in a book on the birds of a geographical unit like Minnesota, banding records are given an important place, such as they must occupy in all future ornithological works. Not only is there an introductory chapter on bird-banding by Frederick C. Lincoln, and one on bird-banding in Minnesota by Dr. Roberts, but a table of Minnesota returns and recoveries is given in a special section of the systematic account of all species which have supplied such records. For example, under Bronzed Grackle there is a table of some forty-five returns and sixteen out-of-state recoveries, while the Giant Red-wing has tabulated nearly one hundred and twenty returns and ten recoveries, from which interesting data may be collated. This recognition of the value of banding records, from a man of Dr. Roberts' experience and standing, is particularly gratifying to the friends of bird-banding, and should provide a new incentive for them to continue their efforts and to increase their banding activities. The records from Minnesota show that much may be done by a few cooperators; how much more would have been accomplished had the number been larger!—J. B. M.

**"Portraits of New England Birds."**—Published by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Dr. Arthur W. Gilbert, *Commissioner*, Department of Agriculture; Dr. John B. May, *Director*, Division of Ornithology, 1932.

This beautiful quarto volume comprises the ninety-two full color plates, by L. A. Fuertes and Allan Brooks and one in black and white by Dr. John B. May, appearing in the three volumes of "The Birds of Massachusetts and other New England States," by Edward Howe Forbush. The plates illustrate three hundred and forty-four species of birds

with five hundred and sixty-four separate figures. In numerous instances there are several paintings of the same species indicating sex, age and seasonal plumages.

Since the three volumes were published, the fourth edition of the "Check-List of North American Birds," prepared by a committee of the American Ornithologists' Union, has appeared. This edition contains many changes in scientific nomenclature as well as new common names of some New England birds which occur here as races, examples being the "Eastern Song Sparrow," "Northern Pine Warbler," etc. In the present volume such changed common names have replaced the old names used by Mr. Forbush in his three volumes.

It is unnecessary again to mention the excellence of the portraits comprising this volume. The State of Massachusetts in issuing the portraits separately has now made them available to everyone and at the low price of \$1.75 per copy. Every bird-bander should possess a copy. They may be secured from the Secretary of the Commonwealth, Room 118, State House, Boston, Massachusetts.—C. L. W.