

The weakness arises out of the frailty of the human rather than out of any inherent fault of the book.

For the novice the existing order of systematic classification seems sufficiently cumbersome to warrant extensive experimentation with the new method employed in this volume. Usage will prove or disprove its worth. The author deserves appreciation and respect for his progressiveness in venturing into uncharted paths while at the same time presenting a volume capably and carefully prepared in other respects along highest standards.—Wendell Taber.

60. What Flies There? (Was Fliegt Denn Da?) By Heinrich Frieling. Kosmos. Gesellschaft der Naturfreunde. Franckh'sche Verlagshandlung. W. Keller & Co., Stuttgart. 1952. 106 pages. 7.25 marks (approximately \$1.75), paper bound.

One of the best field guides of foreign publication that I have seen—and we are constantly comparing such guides with Peterson's *Field Guide to the Birds*—is this little volume from Germany. It is available in either paper or linen binding and is reasonably priced. The book is very well got up. An excellent silhouette section following the introductory material shows representative birds of the different groups. This helps greatly in preliminary classification in the field. The book is profusely illustrated, with 101 black and white drawings and 324 color illustrations. Many of the species represented are identical with our American forms, and the reader who is familiar with these, though unfamiliar with the birds of Europe, can recognize them quickly.

In addition to the individual species represented, there are several black and white plates in which hawks are illustrated as seen from below, as we usually observe them; ducks in flight are shown both from above and below; and gulls are shown from above.

Opposite the well but simply done color plates are given field marks, including size comparisons and the type of environment in which the bird should be found. Also, there is indicated the part of Germany in which the species is usually present and the common German as well as the scientific name of the bird. A section of five pages is devoted to casuals which may occur in a region from time to time, many of these having occurred perhaps only from one to three times in Germany.

Because of the excellence of the illustrations and the similarity of many German names to the English, even those unfamiliar with the German language will find this book of much interest and of use in comparing the forms that occur in Germany with those that are found in the United States.—C. Russell Mason.

NOTES AND NEWS

On December 29, 1952, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service issued a directive to holders of bird banding permits, indicating that in future special authorization would be needed for the use of any band other than the standard numbered band, for the marking of plumage, or for the use of nets such as the Japanese mist net. It is unfortunate that the Bird Banding Office could not have accompanied this with a brief explanation of the reasons behind the restrictions, as the directive itself was not worded in a way to produce the cheerful cooperation of banders. In the aggregate, the individual banders have a far greater investment in time and facilities than the Bird Banding Office and other banding activities of the Fish and Wildlife Service, and it behooves the heads of the Service to administer the program with this constantly in mind.

While we deplore the bureaucratic way in which the restrictions were announced, Mr. Reed's discussion in this issue of flanging of aluminum bands illustrates one of the serious problems with which the restrictions are concerned, the mutilation of birds from existing methods of using aluminum color bands. Corollary difficulties were the variation in color of some of these bands in the manufacturing process, the tendency of some to lose color by fading or the wearing away of surface color, and the occasional use of such bands at random without considering possible interference with projects already underway (thus ruining

the new project as well as the old). In Great Britain the British Trust for Ornithology is attempting to set up a complete central registry for all color-marking of birds (see *British Birds*, 45(5): 183-84, 1952).

With mist nets, many species not previously taken by the average banding station can be secured, including such confusing groups as the fall warblers; accordingly, it is reasonable to call for higher qualifications in the identification of birds from those who want to use nets. Also, it appears that in recent years trouble has been encountered in some sections from the netting of small birds by certain alien groups for food. Nets are a highly effective and dangerous poacher's tool, difficult to control when in the wrong hands. To prevent such abuses their availability and use must be strictly controlled.