

Most specialists in any one field will find something new to them about other fields, though as the book does not include a bibliography, tracing down details on some points may not be easy. For the general public, the breadth of coverage and the Milnes' light, smooth style make this an admirable introduction to the subject.

Like most wide-ranging compilers, the Milnes have trouble with some of the technical details. They include a sound, brief outline of modern theories on navigation by birds, even mentioning recent work on celestial navigation. While they use the Evening Grosbeak and Cattle Egret to good advantage to illustrate how species may make more or less permanent extensions of their ranges, the timing indicated for these two examples is somewhat inaccurate. The discussion of natural limitations on the indefinite increase of the progeny of one pair of birds (in this case, the Bee Hummingbird of Cuba) suggests, in rather unclear phases, that small birds may normally live to be 5 years old, which is certainly twice the average for small passerines; it is not unlikely that the average life span of this small hummer is nearer 1 year than 2, counting from time of leaving the nest. The statement that over 100,000,000 birds have been banded is truly remarkable, and must include domestic poultry for something like 85% of the total, which is highly misleading (the total for the U. S. and Canada is just reaching 8 million; the British scheme passed 1 million within the past 2 years; and it is doubtful whether any other scheme has passed the million mark).—E. Alexander Bergstrom.

93. The Mute Swan in England/Its History, and the Ancient Custom of Swan-Keeping. Norman F. Ticehurst. 1957. Cleaver-Hume Press Ltd., pp. i-xiii, 1-133, ill. Price 35/-. This remarkable book is concerned with the unique history of the domestication of the Mute Swan in England. The author has drawn on a rich record of "swan rolls," laws, and ordinances (only one possessor of swan rolls refused him access) to give an interesting account of the probable origin and practice of swan-keeping, the gradual development of law and order in the practice, and finally a grand summary of the known marks, their necessity, origin, and ownership.

The reader is entertained to an intriguing resumé of the known references to swans in the 13th century, a delightful collection of excerpts from old manuscripts dealing with the use to which these swans were put, and some records of the abundance of swans in the period from the 14th to the 17th centuries. The laws, ordinances, and customs are dealt with in detail from "The Act for Swans," 1482 to the "Swan-Upping total for 1941," per Richard Turk, King's Swanherd. The book contains an interesting plate of an early 17th century manuscript and many extracts from other original manuscripts.

On the whole the work has more to offer the antiquarian and social historian, but naturalists should, nonetheless, find in its pages much of interest and certainly much to stimulate the inquiring mind.—Richard G. Allan.

NOTES AND NEWS

The annual meeting of the Northeastern Bird-Banding Association will take place on Saturday, October 4, at Drum in Farm, South Lincoln, Mass. (on rt. 117, a little west of rt. 128 and a little north of the Mass. Turnpike). There will be a formal program; anyone interested in banding is welcome.

Dr. William H. Drury, Jr., Director of the Hatheway School of Conservation Education of the Massachusetts Audubon Society (based at Drumlin Farm) was designated as delegate of the NEBBA to the International Ornithological Congress in Finland.

Representatives of the four regional banding associations plan to meet on the evening of Wednesday, October 15, at New York, in the course of the A.O.U. meeting there.

Inquiries about the three sizes of mist nets stocked by the NEBBA should be addressed to E. Alexander Bergstrom, 37 Old Brook Road, West Hartford 7, Conn.

The Nantucket migration studies referred to in the lead paper in this issue were made possible, for the years 1955 through 1957, by a research grant from the Old Dominion Foundation to John V. Dennis, leader of the group participating (and co-author of the lead paper). The NEBBA has received a most generous gift from Mrs. Roy E. Larsen (of Fairfield, Conn., and Nantucket) to make possible the continuation of these studies for another three years. Mr. Dennis is expected to be on the island for most, if not all, of the 1958 fall migration season. The Council of the NEBBA has appointed a Committee on the Nantucket Ornithological Research Station, to administer the project and to serve as consultants to Mr. Dennis and others working on Nantucket: Mrs. Larsen, Aaron M. Bagg, James Baird, John H. Conkey, and E. Alexander Bergstrom (chairman). Primarily because the burdens of the regular NEBBA Treasurer are heavy, Mr. Conkey has been appointed assistant treasurer to hold and disburse project funds.