

We are pleased to note that The Guide to Nature has introduced a department of Ornithology, which is edited by Harry G. Higbee. In the September number there are several good reproductions from photographs. The introduction of this feature should serve to increase the popularity of this magazine of the Agassiz Association.

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The editor will have something to say about certain interesting features of his summer experiences in the December Wilson Bulletin. It will be recalled that a number of articles appeared from his pen about his trip down this same coast in June, 1907. The intervening eight years has witnessed marked changes, which it is proposed to note at this time.

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Many readers of the Wilson Bulletin must have spent some of the summer where they have been able to gather interesting facts about bird life. The editor will be glad to receive accounts of these studies and the conclusions reached for the pages of the Bulletin. The real value of such studies is appreciated only when you write them up for publication.

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## GENERAL NOTES

### BIRDS AND THE WORLD WAR.

A private soldier now on leave in England says birds warn the allies of German gas attacks. Long before the smell of the fumes can be detected by the man in the trenches, there is to be heard a clamouring of alarmed and awakened birds. These soon fly away beyond the reach of the deadly fumes, but the soldiers have had warning, and meantime adjust their respirators, and make other preparations to meet the gas. This item of war news is an addendum to the remarks in Dr. Shufeldt's very interesting paper on Ornithology and the War in Europe.

J. H. GURNEY.

Keswick Hall, Norfolk.

TAVERNER ON CORMORANTS VS. SALMON.—On account of numerous complaints that cormorants were damaging the salmon fisheries of the Gaspé coast of Quebec, Mr. P. A. Taverner and two assistants investigated conditions there for two months during the summer of 1914.

General observations did not support the contention that cor-

morants destroy salmon, nor did stomach examinations. Of 32 stomachs examined, 5 were empty, 3 contained unrecognizable food, 16 contained sculpins, 5 herrings, one capelin, one eel, and 2 tomcod or allied fishes.

Furthermore, the bulk of evidence shows that salmon have lately been increasing from year to year. "The cormorants are also generally increasing in number, the rookeries are enlarging and new ones being established. These facts taken together do not indicate that the cormorants are markedly harmful to the salmon."\*—W. L. M.

\* Mus. Bul. 13, Canada Dept. of Mines, 1915, p. 14.

#### INCUBATION PERIOD OF THE GANNET.

In the very interesting list of periods of incubation, as noted in different birds, contributed to your pages by Mr. F. L. Burns, the period allowed for the Gannet (*Sula bassana* (L.)) is given at 39 days, but this seems too short.

An egg laid on April 22d at the Bass Rock on the east coast of Scotland, and at once inscribed with the date by Mr. J. M. Campbell, the lighthouse keeper, was not hatched until June 5th, which gives a period of 44 days.

Another Gannet's egg, laid in confinement at Brighton in Sussex, is recorded by the late Mr. E. T. Booth to have hatched out about the 43d day, as stated in "The Gannet" (p. 355), where the *pros* and *cons* of the subject are discussed at some length and different opinions quoted.

J. H. GURNEY.

Keswick Hall, Norwich.

#### A NEW LOUISIANA BIRD.

The observance of a solitary species of bird life has not only supplied the Louisiana list with a new bird but with the one order of the seventeen found in the United States that has been missing since the avian life of the state has been studied by those who preceded Audubon and those who have followed him.

The species observed was a Wilson petrel (*Oceanites oceanicus*), sometimes known as one of "Mother Cary's Chickens," of the order *Tubinares*, or Tube-nosed swimmers, which includes, besides the petrels, the fulmars and shearwaters.

The discovery was made by Herbert K. Job, head of the Department of Applied Ornithology of the National Association of Audubon Societies, and Stanley Clisby Arthur, ornithologist of the Conservation Commission of Louisiana, while they were on an expe-