

Whether or not the Common Terns have ever nested previously at the Little Cedar Point, I, personally, am unable to say, as this is the first year I have had access to the place. An old fisherman, told me, however, that there had been a colony once before, "many years ago" during a period of high water. The most obvious explanation of this year's nesting would be that the high lake levels had cut down the usual breeding areas and driven the birds to new locations. Another fact that would seem to show that the terns were desperately in need of a nesting site is that the fishing shack, inhabited by several men, was within 300 feet of the nearest nest. These fishermen pulled their nets daily and their boats plied back and forth to the city of Toledo. When one considers the inherent shyness of colony-nesting birds, the courage of this group is worthy of note.

TOLEDO, OHIO.

A LETTER FROM ROBERT RIDGWAY

BY FRANK L. BURNS

The following letter from Robert Ridgway, written so short a time before his death, contains some information that will be of general interest; and it is with the thought of sharing this information with the many admirers of Mr. Ridgway that I offer the letter for publication.

LARCHMOUNT

1030 South Morgan Street

OLNEY, ILLINOIS

December 31, 1928.

Mr. Frank L. Burns,
Berwyn, Pennsylvania,

My dear Mr. Burns:

In reply to your inquiry of the 28th inst., just received, I have to say that it is impossible for me to forecast the appearance of the two as yet unpublished volumes of "Birds of North and Middle America." My work on Part 9 has been completed for some two or three years, and in the preparation of Part 10, the concluding volume, I am now on the home stretch. If my health and strength hold out this should be completed by the end of next summer, at the farthest. I think it is not fully realized by most people who are interested that the labor of preparing this book is becoming more difficult each year. This is caused mainly by the enormous increase in ornithological literature, all of which has to be studied and bibliographical refer-

ences made, but I am now handicapped by the inability to work as steadily as I formerly could—in fact have reached an age (79 years on my next birthday) when it would be better for me if work of this kind should be dropped altogether.

My own part in the completion of the last two volumes will, necessarily, consist in the treatment of the higher groups (down to families only in Part 10 but to genera in Part 9, with compilation of full synonymies down to subspecies in both); in other words, the real labor, indeed the drudgery, leaving for others the interesting work of describing the species and subspecies. Naturally, I wish that it were possible for me to do the latter myself, but, obviously, I cannot.

Very truly yours,

ROBERT RIDGWAY.

CHIMNEY SWIFT BANDING OPERATIONS AT CHATTANOOGA

BY WYMAN R. GREEN

We have confined our bird banding operations at Chattanooga almost wholly to Chimney Swifts (*Chaetura pelagica*) for the reason that these birds visit our city in tens of thousands. It seems to be a favorite stopover place for them. Especially in September and October they come in enormous numbers, on their way south. Most of our operations so far have been during these two months. Not so many are observed as they pass on their way north in the month of May. Possibly their north and south migrations are not over the same route.

There are many chimneys available in Chattanooga and a large number are used. It is a veritable paradise for anyone interested in the banding of Chimney Swifts. We first began our operations in October, 1928, when the birds were moving south. We banded a few again in May as they passed through going north, and in September and October of 1929 we again set our traps and banded on a more extensive scale, as the swifts were returning southward.

The accompanying tabulation summarizes the banding operations to date so far as our local work is concerned.

It will be noted that a total of 3,737 swifts were banded during the period from October 16, 1928, to October 19, 1929. During this time we captured seventeen swifts that had been already banded by other operators. Throughout the whole of our banding work we have had fifty-four returns. It is significant that on October 8, 1929, we had at least one return from each of our three previous catches. Also