

ORNITHOLOGICAL LITERATURE

BIRDS OF MASSACHUSETTS AND OTHER NEW ENGLAND STATES. Part III. Land Birds from Sparrows to Thrushes. By Edward Howe Forbush. Issued by authority of the [Massachusetts] Legislature, 1929, and distributed by the Secretary of the Commonwealth (Room 118, State House, Boston). Pp. i-xlvi+1-466. Col. pls. 63-93 (30). Figs. 68-97. Distribution maps, 17, text figs. 23, and a portrait of Mr. Forbush as a frontispiece. Price, \$5.00.

This volume forms the third and concluding one of the series. The preceding volumes were reviewed in the *WILSON BULLETIN* for March, 1926 (XXXVIII, pp. 60-61) and for June, 1928 (XL, pp. 118-119). Before the last volume was published the author passed away, so that the entire work now fittingly becomes a monument to the life work and memory of Mr. Forbush, not alone in his native state, but in the scientific world in general.

The present volume contains a biography of Mr. Forbush by Dr. John B. May, upon whom also rested the general editorial responsibility for the entire volume. Volume III treats of all of the sparrows and of all of the families on to the end of the present A. O. U. Check-List. The text follows the same plan of the preceding volumes, and we need not repeat the comments made in our earlier reviews of this work. The third volume contains the indexes for the three volumes.

The three volumes contain ninety-three colored plates, thirty of which are in the present volume. Of the latter seven are by Fuertes, the remainder are by Brooks. This series of plates alone will make the work useful to students beyond the territory covered by the text.

No ornithological work since Coues' Key impresses us as being so generally useful to the increasing group of amateur ornithologists as this one by Forbush, taking into consideration description, illustration, and cost. It is a magnificent piece of work, for which the State of Massachusetts may be proud, and the rest of us grateful.—T. C. S.

BIRD SONG. By Aretas A. Saunders. New York State Museum Handbook No. 7, Albany, N. Y., 1929. Pp. 1-202. Price, 75 cents.

This booklet is issued as one of the "handbooks" of the New York State Museum. It may be considered monographic in the range of the treatment of the subject of bird song, though it may not be so complete in reference to the literature and in the bibliography. The appended bibliography is a very useful one, nevertheless. It would be superfluous to attempt in a review to outline the subject matter; for a glance at the table of contents suggests that almost any topic concerning bird song is discussed. The author has given considerable study to the various methods of representing bird song graphically, and the pages on this subject will doubtless be of interest to many. We judge this booklet to be among the most readable and interesting ornithological papers which have recently appeared, being devoid of technicality, yet comprehensive and scientific.—T. C. S.

THE BOOK OF BIRD LIFE. By Arthur A. Allen. D. Van Nostrand Co., Inc., 250 Fourth Ave., New York, 1930. Pp. i-xxii+1-426. Figs. 1-275, and colored frontispiece. Price, \$3.50.

So far as we know Dr. Allen holds the only college or university chair of ornithology in the country. The present volume is another evidence of his industry and achievement in this special field of biology. Perhaps the noteworthy feature of this book is the very large number of original photographic illustrations, in the making of which Dr. Allen is a past master. We marvel not so much at the technical skill, but at the patience and time necessary to secure the results. The book is divided into twenty chapters some of which cover the subjects of ancestry, classification, distribution, ecological communities, migration, courtship, home-life, adaptations, coloration and molt, economic value, and various methods of bird study, including study of nests, bird photography, bird banding, care of wild bird pets, etc., etc. It is to be seen that a wide field is covered. At the close of each chapter there is a short list of germane reading references. The text may be summarized as a simple and reliable presentation of the broader biological aspects of ornithology, and it will serve as an excellent introduction to the subject. The publishers have not made the book so attractive externally as might have been expected, but it is substantially bound and appears to be durable.—T. C. S.

THE NATURAL HISTORY OF THE DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT (*PHALACROCORAX AURITUS AURITUS* (LESSON)). By Harrison Flint Lewis. Ottawa, Canada (H. C. Miller, 175 Nepean St.), 1929. Pp. 1-94. Figures 14, including 10 halftones, 2 drawings, and 2 maps. Price, 75 cents.

Monographic papers, such as the one here mentioned, are always of the greatest interest and value. What a millenium it will be when we can have so complete a treatment of every species among North American birds! Seasonal range and migration are fully treated. All known breeding colonies of this subspecies are listed, totalling 94 colonies, with a breeding population of 21,476 birds. The author estimates that there must be enough unknown colonies to bring the total up to 115, with a total population of about 40,000. The surprising thing about these figures is that they are so small. Certainly, the future will have to balance this species very nicely in order to avert disaster.

Many new observations on courtship and mating are presented, and the author believes that the male takes the lead in this matter, as well as in the selection of the nest-site. The birds do not develop full crests until the fourth year. At the close of the paper the author enumerates various lines of needed research which will be of interest to those in position to pursue a study of this species. A very full bibliography is appended, and good bibliographies always represent labor and are correspondingly useful. One may find it difficult to keep up with all the current publications in the field of ornithology, but this paper should not be overlooked by the earnest student of birds.—T. C. S.

THE EUROPEAN STARLING ON HIS WESTWARD WAY. By Marcia Brownell Bready. The Knickerbocker Press, New York, 1929. Pp. i-xxvi+1-141. 1 colored plate. Price, \$2.

Part I is devoted to the economic value; Part II, to the song; Part III, to systematic relations and natural history. It is clear that Mrs. Bready has risen to the defense of the Starling. In dealing with the question of economic value the author has selected some of the many current facts to the advantage of this species. She very effectively plays the role of defense attorney. After presenting many facts and figures to prove the beneficial status of the Starling as an insect destroyer, the author brings in the testimony of entomologists to the effect that insect collecting has not been noticeably spoiled by the Starling's predaceous work, and thus scores twice for the bird.

The real contribution of this book probably lies in the three or four chapters on the Starling's song. Besides showing the simple beauty of the Starling's song the author carries out a philosophical analysis of this song to follow which fully requires some knowledge of harmony and counterpoint. The melodies recorded by the author as having been sung by the Starling at Bay Ridge show the use of every tone of the diatonic major scale, and the major chord and its relative minor. When one reads the melody which uses the C major triad followed by its dominant minor (G minor) triad, or the melody using all the tones of a diminished seventh chord, one is indeed tempted to acknowledge that the Starling's musical fundamentals are not much inferior to the present day music of man. Mrs. Bready's suggestion of a parallelism between the development of the Starling's song and that of human music seems therefore worthy of consideration. The reviewer is under obligation to Professor James Reistrup for collaboration in estimating the musical discussion in this work.—T. C. S.

THE SUMMER BIRDS OF THE NORTHERN ADIRONDACK MOUNTAINS. By Aretas A. Saunders. Roosevelt Wild Life Bulletin, Vol 5, No. 3, 1929. Pp. 323-499, Colored pls. 1-2, Figs. 93-160, Contour maps 7-8. Price, \$1.

This Bulletin is a convenient guide for the study of birds in the Adirondack Mountains. Some geographic and ecologic discussion precedes the catalogue of birds. Each species is discussed under the headings, description, identification, voice, occurrence, habitat. Ten pages are devoted to the relations between the birds and the forests. Finally, there is reprinted the list of summer birds of the Adirondacks originally published in 1877 by Theodore Roosevelt and H. D. Minot, including 97 species. Saunders' present list includes 121 species.—T. C. S.

BIRDS OF A LIMITED AREA IN EASTERN KANSAS. By Jean M. Linsdale. Reprinted from Univ. Kansas Sci. Bull., XVIII, No. 11, April, 1928. Pp. 517-626.

Dr. Linsdale spent 200 days in field work (during 1921-1925) in a limited area along the Missouri River in Kansas. On the basis of this work a number of papers have been published. Two papers on the ecology have appeared respectively in the WILSON BULLETIN and the *University of Kansas Science Bulletin*. The paper here noticed is an annotated list of the birds found.—T. C. S.

RELATIONS BETWEEN PLANTS AND BIRDS IN THE MISSOURI RIVER REGION. By Jean Linsdale. Reprinted from the Univ. Kansas Sci. Bull., XVIII, No. 10, April, 1928. Pp. 499-515.

This paper presents a list of the more important trees and shrubs in the lower Missouri Valley, with a discussion of the relations of bird life to them, especially touching on their use for suitable nesting sites, food, shelter, and nest materials. The text indicates keen and careful observation, and presents a most interesting collection of commonplace facts which are usually taken for granted by writers. Apparently, the author has given most attention to the location of nests; we would have welcomed a similar close account of the food relations.—T. C. S.

SOME BIRDS OF MARYLAND. By T. Gilbert Pearson. Published by the Conservation Department of the State of Maryland. Pp. 1-70, 32 colored plates. 1929.

Another attractive state brochure on the common birds, well written and beautifully illustrated. Thirty-two species are given each one page of discussion. Each species is illustrated by a colored plate—eighteen by Horsfall, six by Brooks, six by Sawyer, and two by Fuertes. The coloring of one or two of the plates is open to criticism—the one of the Barn Swallow seems to be especially faulty. While no price is stated, interested persons may probably secure a copy, so long as the supply lasts, by addressing Hon. E. Lee LeCompte, State Game Warden, 512 Munsey Bldg., Baltimore, Md.—T. C. S.

THE RING-NECKED PHEASANT—ITS HISTORY AND HABITS. By Dana J. Leffingwell. Occasional Papers of the Charles R. Conner Museum, Pullman, Washington, 1928.

We find here a very full discussion of this bird as it occurs in North America. Its general distribution throughout the world is presented rather fully. The habits and the life history are then discussed more fully than we have seen in any other paper. An excellent bibliography is included. The author reviews the evidence for and against the pheasant as an economic asset, and comes to the conclusion that the balance is in favor of the bird. But to hold this status the bird must be prevented from purloining the planted kernels of corn, by applying to the latter a coating of tar; this task devolves upon the farmer. The author found that corn so treated was delayed in germination about four days. He also states that "There seems to be no basis for the belief that pheasants destroy the nests or interfere seriously with other game birds."—T. C. S.

A SYSTEMATIC CLASSIFICATION FOR THE BIRDS OF THE WORLD. By Alexander Wetmore. Reprinted as a separate from Proc. U. S. Nat. Museum, Vol. 76, Art. 24, pp. 1-8. 1929.

This paper of eight pages gives a compact outline of the newer classification of the birds of the world, including all the categories down to, and including, families. It includes the fossil groups also. It is an extension of the same arrangement proposed by the author and the late W. deWitt Miller for the forthcoming A. O. U. Check-List and published in the *Auk* (1926, XLIII, 337-346), and based in general on the system of Gadow. A few changes from the 1926 list are noted, and the name of one superorder is misspelled. This latest arrangement is made up of 33 orders, including 190 families. Those who wish to keep informed on the progress of taxonomic ornithology will find this paper a very useful source of reference.—T. C. S.

A RECOUNT OF THE BALTIMORE ORIOLES NESTING IN MOUNT PLEASANT, IOWA.
By H. E. Jaques. Proc. Ia. Acad. Sci., XXXV, 1928, pp. 305-306.

In the winters of 1921 and 1927, after the leaves had fallen from the trees, the author and his students made a count of the nests of this species in the town, and also kept track of the kinds of trees occupied. A total of 123 nests were found in 1921, and 132 in 1927. The soft maple was the preferred tree, the white elm second, boxelder third, with seven other kinds of trees used in less numbers. The constancy in oriole population over a period of six years is quite remarkable. The inference seems to be clear that the birth rate about equals the death rate—that Nature is a very clever adjuster.—T. C. S.

HOW TO MAKE A CAT TRAP. By James Silver and Frank N. Jarvis. Leaflet No. 50, U. S. Biol. Survey, Washington, D. C., 1929. Pp. 1-4. Price, 5 cents.

Full directions for making and using such a trap are given.—T. C. S.

"FRAMING" THE BIRDS OF PREY. An Arraignment of the Fanatical and Economically Harmful Campaign of Extermination Being Waged Against the Hawks and Owls. By Davis Quinn. Privately published by the author, 3548 Tryon Ave., Bronx, New York, N. Y., 1929. Pp. 1-20. Free.

The author makes a vigorous protest against the indiscriminate slaughter of the birds of prey. Considerable information on this subject is here gathered together in compact form.—T. C. S.

BIRDS AND MAMMALS OF THE MOUNT LOGAN EXPEDITION, 1925. By Hamilton Laing, P. A. Taverner, R. M. Anderson. In Bulletin 56, Annual Report for 1927, National Museum of Canada, 1929. Pp. 69-107.

Eighty-five birds and seventeen mammals are listed as a result of this expedition. The work of this expedition seems to have been done chiefly in the southwestern corner of the Yukon Territory. The annotations contain numerous critical notes of much interest and value, e. g., on the Solitary Sandpiper. We are glad to observe that a technical and scientific paper can be prepared with binomial nomenclature, as evidenced here.—T. C. S.

OSTEOLOGY OF THE CALIFORNIA ROAD-RUNNER RECENT AND PLEISTOCENE. By Leigh Marian Larson. Univ. Calif. Publ. Zool., Vol. 32, No. 4, 1930. Pp. 409-428, Figs. 1-3.

This essay will be of interest to morphologists. Most of us would not attempt to identify a Road-runner which lived 100,000 years ago. But the specialist not only recognizes the bones but points out the differences from the bones of the corresponding bird that lives today, and furthermore speculates upon the ecological relationships of the ancient race. Osteological evolution in this bird has advanced so slightly that the living race and the Pleistocene race are both referred to the same species.—T. C. S.

BIRDS OF THE PORTLAND AREA, OREGON. By Stanley G. Jewett and Ira N. Gabrielson. Pac. Coast Avifauna, No. 19, Berkeley, California, 1929. Pp. 1-54, Figs. 1-21. Price, \$2.

The authors list 186 birds for the area immediately surrounding Portland. Twenty-one introduced species and six hypothetical species are also given. A list of this kind is useful for local purposes and also to outsiders who may be spending a vacation in the region treated.—T. C. S.

BIRDS OF THE PAST IN NORTH AMERICA. By Alexander Wetmore. Report Smith. Inst. for 1928, Washington, D. C., 1929. Pp. 377-389, Pls. 1-11.

An up-to-date account of American fossil birds is presented in this paper.—T. C. S.

MANUAL FOR BIRD BANDERS. By Frederick C. Lincoln and S. Prentiss Baldwin. Misc. Pub. No. 58, U. S. Dept. Agric, Washington, D. C., 1929. Pp. 1-112, Figs. 1-70. Price, 30 cents.

As the title suggests this booklet is a manual of instruction for the bird bander, and, doubtless, most active banders have already received a copy of it. It includes a full discussion of traps of all kinds, minor trapping equipment, bait, bands, reports, etc. The single paragraph on the history of banding seems to be inadequate even for a publication of this kind, though the authors doubtless consider that the history has been sufficiently covered in earlier publications.—T. C. S.

THE BIRDS OF DANE COUNTY, WISCONSIN. By A. W. Schorger. Wisc. Acad. Sci. Arts & Lett., XXIV, 1929. Pp. 457-499.

This paper is the first installment of a local list. It follows the new classification, which the A. O. U. is expected to adopt in the new check-list. On this basis the present list covers the ground from Gaviidae to Picidae, inclusive.—T.C.S.

THE WHITE PINE WEEVIL (*PISSODES STROBI* PECK), ITS BIOLOGY AND CONTROL. By Harvey J. MacAloney. Bull. N. Y. State Coll. Forestry, III, No. 1, Feb., 1930.

We mention this entomological paper because of a page (p. 56) of discussion of the role played by birds in checking this insect pest of the forest. At least seven birds are named which feed upon the larvae of this beetle, and the Downy is the only woodpecker included. "The birds actually observed in various localities comprise the white-breasted nuthatch, downy woodpecker, chickadee, rose-breasted grosbeak and certain warblers which were not identified." This is not a positive statement that these birds uncover and eat the larvae from the leader stems of the tree, but the context affords the inference that they do; and we are left to assume that this benefits the growing tree.—T. C. S.

PROPAGATION OF UPLAND GAME BIRDS. By W. L. McAtee. U. S. Dept. Agric. Farmers' Bull. No. 1613, Washington, D. C., 1930. Pp. 1-60, Figs. 1-35. Price, 10 cents.

This is a general discussion of interest primarily to breeders. The greater part of the text refers to the methods of breeding the Ring-necked Pheasant, with some consideration of the Bob-white, Hungarian Partridge, and Wild Turkey. It may probably be assumed that this breeding work has assumed such proportions as to command the time and effort of the scientific staff of the Government. And yet there are many who believe that much of the effort in this direction will eventually work out to the distinct disadvantage of the native birds. Of course, we think that it would be far better to make it possible for these birds to breed naturally and abundantly in their own habitats, and thus to maintain the hunting supply.—T. C. S.

GAME BIRDS SUITABLE FOR NATURALIZING IN THE UNITED STATES. By W. L. McAtee. U. S. Dept. Agric. Circ. No. 96, Washington, D. C., 1929. Pp. 1-23, figs. 1-14. Price, 10 cents.

The first paragraph of this paper is as follows: "Sportsmen share the admiration of nature students for native game birds and will cooperate to the fullest extent in preventing their extermination, but they see the necessity for using exotic species also if the game supply is to be maintained or increased. Such increase is widely demanded, and to effect it necessitates the fostering of birds that respond most profitably to game-propagation methods. Where native game birds are abundant there is little or no need to plant exotic species; but where native species do not supply the demand, foreign game birds are being introduced. Let the native game birds enjoy the protection of game sanctuaries as numerous and extensive as can be afforded, but on those parts of our domain where public shooting is practiced and its continuance is desired, the practical necessities of the situation require the use of species of game birds that will produce the best results, regardless of their origin."

We may accept this meticulously worded statement as the present policy of the Biological Survey and the Department of Agriculture. "Let the native game birds enjoy the . . . sanctuaries" if they can find any, but turn the exotics loose to enjoy the world. And, dear bird lover, if you live near a game bird sanctuary, fortunately, you may now and then see a native game bird, but off the sanctuary expect only aliens. This is now the settled policy of exterminatory displacement of the Biological Survey if Circular 96 means what it implies. We do not for a moment believe that the author of this bulletin prefers exotic to native birds, and we doubt if his personal judgment approves the wholesale importation of foreign species to this country. We can not believe that the scientific staff of the Biological Survey is in favor of this. Our past and present experiences with exotic races would make us all conservative in this direction. There must be sinister pressure from some source behind a policy of this kind. What we need and want is more effort to strengthen our native species—not by artificial propagation, but by regulation and control of the environmental factors, so as to permit the birds to propagate naturally. We do not object to hunting *per se*, but excessive hunting leads to extermination, to which everyone, who has given any consideration to the matter, does object. Let us remove the demand for importation of foreign birds by increasing the abundance of the native species. This is a proper and natural field of effort for the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Importation is the line of least resistance so far as the hunting problem is concerned, and is unworthy of an organization with the potential force of a government bureau. We are constrained to believe that the outlook for native wild life is not bright under the present federal regime. We are glad to call attention to a number of instructive maps in this bulletin, viz., one showing the average annual precipitation of the world, another showing the distribution of the major classes of vegetation over the earth, the average January and July temperatures, distribution of native vegetation in the United States, etc. Then, of course, there are brief accounts of the various game birds, chiefly gallinaceous, which have been introduced into this country or which are recommended for introduction.—T. C. S.

PROPAGATION OF AQUATIC GAME BIRDS. By W. L. McAtee. U. S. Dept. Agric. Farmers' Bull. No. 1612, Washington, D. C., 1930. Pp. 1-40, Figs. 1-25. Price, 10 cents.

The whole subject of artificial propagation is here considered from the practical angle, with special attention to the Mallard and the Canada Goose.—T. C. S.

The number of mimeographed quasi-publications seems to be increasing—two new ones having come to our attention recently. The *Raven* (Vol. I, No. 1, January, 1930) is issued by the Virginia Society of Ornithology. This publication received a small initial subsidy from the State Fish and Game Commission. (Edited by Dr. J. J. Murray, Lexington, Va., \$1.50 per year). The *Snowy Egret* is a 17-page leaflet issued by the bird students at Berrien Springs, Mich., and is substantially bound with a cover. (\$1 per year, H. A. Olsen, Berrien Springs, Mich.). We have received two more copies of the *Flicker*, issued by the Minnesota Bird Club (Charles Evans, 3250 47th Ave. S., Minneapolis, \$1 per year). The last number received was Vol. II, No. 2, March-April, 1930. *Letter of Information* is issued monthly with regularity by the Nebraska Ornithologists' Union (Prof. M. H. Swenk, Secretary-Treasurer, 1410 N 37th St., Lincoln, \$2 per year). No. 50 is the last issue. *North Dakota Bird Notes* is issued at intervals by Prof. O. A. Stevens, North Dakota Agricultural College, Fargo. The I. O. U. *Bulletin*, issued quarterly by the Iowa Ornithologists' Union has recently appeared in printed rather than mimeographed form, though it retains the same page size. The last issue received was for January-February, 1930. (Edited by Dr. F. L. R. Roberts, Spirit Lake, Iowa, \$1 per year). *Inland Bird Banding News* has issued three numbers (M. J. Magee, Treasurer, Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., \$2.50 per year). *News from the Bird Banders* is issued quarterly by the Western Bird Banding Association, and is very neatly mimeographed on a good quality of paper (Walter I. Allen, Bus. Mgr., 2057 Pepper Drive, Altadena, Calif.).

We may also mention several local publications which appear in print. The *Wren-Tit* is a four-page circular issued by the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society four times a year (Dr. Gayle B. Pickwell, State Teachers College, San Jose, Calif. The circular alone is 25 cents per year). The *Florida Naturalist* is published quarterly by the Florida Audubon Society (edited by R. J. Longstreet, Daytona Beach, Fla., \$1 per year). We acknowledge the January and April, 1930, numbers, Vol. III, Nos. 2 and 3. The *Murrelet*, which has hitherto been issued as a mimeographed sheet by the Pacific Northwest Bird and Mammal Society, now appears as a 28-page tri-annual printed magazine, and we acknowledge Vol. XI, No. 1, January, 1930, in the new form. The rate is \$1.50 per year, subscriptions to be sent to Leo K. Couch, Old Capitol Bldg., Olympia, Wash. The *Annual Bulletin* of the Illinois Audubon Society for 1930 appeared in April, and contains the customary splendid collection of notes and information. An exceptionally fine photograph of the Wilson's Snipe provides the frontispiece. This does not purport to be a complete list of such publications, but only a record of those which we have received during the last six months or so. We are glad to give all the encouragement we can to these local organizations and publications. They help much to develop interest in ornithology, to preserve the material, and to advance the science. They are all glad to receive subscriptions from any part of the country.