

ORNITHOLOGICAL LITERATURE

THE BIRDS OF MINNESOTA. By Thomas S. Roberts, M. D. Two volumes. The University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1932. Pp. i-xxiii+1-691, i-xv+1-821. Ninety-two color plates, 606 text illustrations, five maps. Price, \$6.00.

The ornithological students who live in the Mississippi Valley will regard this work with satisfaction and pride, as evidence of the virility and activity of the middle west in this particular branch of natural history. It is a beautiful piece of work mechanically, and a most laudable one textually. While "The Birds of Minnesota" is limited by title to a single state, yet the list of birds and descriptions will fit very closely also the group of states in the upper Mississippi Valley. It is the last word on the ornithology of this region, and is likely to remain such for some time.

Volume One opens with "An Historical and Biographical Review of Ornithology in Minnesota" (pp. 1-18), a subject always of importance to students, and in this case fully and explicitly treated. For our own part we heartily concur in the high estimate given in these pages to the work of Dr. Elliott Coues. The author has been very generous in his acknowledgment of assistance from many sources. In the chapter devoted to geography the author presents an entertaining and instructive account of the topography, vegetation, and climate of the state. Further on are discussed the subjects of life zones, seasonal occurrence, hypothetical species, sight records, game birds and laws pertaining to them, economic value, enemies, parasites and diseases of birds, songs, bird banding, etc., etc. On page 109 the author states that "cats have no legal standing". We had been led to understand otherwise. It is possible that their status varies in different states. We hope that they have no legal status, but would advise our readers to make sure before overtly destroying a trespassing cat that may later be claimed by a neighbor.

The body of the work is a descriptive catalogue of the birds known to have occurred within the state. Most of the specific accounts are presented under the paragraph headings, general range, Minnesota range, migration dates, nests, food, field marks, followed by the author's own copious annotations.

Two hundred and seventy-two pages in Volume Two are devoted to keys and descriptions—a wonderful source of technical information. Fifty-seven pages of bibliography of Minnesota ornithology probably cover the field pretty thoroughly, though the author calls it abridged. The usual index is present.

Volume One contains fifty colored plates, each portraying several species. Volume Two contains forty-two colored plates. Six artists have contributed the plates, viz., Messrs. Allan Brooks, F. L. Jaques, George Miksch Sutton, Louis Agassiz Fuertes, Walter Alois Weber, and W. J. Breckenridge. The last two named are younger artists who are now bidding for honors in this field of work, and we think that they are assured of a position of leadership among bird artists of the time. Mr. Weber's work on the finches and Mr. Breckenridge's work on the sandpipers, just for example, is of a high order in each case. Mr. Jaques' painting of the Great Blue Herons and the cranes is a beautiful thing.

About the only criticism which we feel able to offer is to the effect that the binding seems a little frail for so heavy a volume, and we wonder how long it will hold out with ordinary usage. Such a work as this is usually made possible through philanthropy. And, in this instance a group of Minnesotans, doubtless

friends of Dr. Roberts, made contributions (approximating a total of \$30,000, according to a rumor which has reached us) toward the publication of this work. This generosity has made it possible to sell the work at far below cost. We also understand that the edition is rapidly becoming exhausted, which probably accounts for the advertisement of the set at rather high prices in eastern book catalogues.—T. C. S.

THE SLAUGHTER OF THE YELLOWSTONE PARK PELICANS. Issued by the Emergency Conservation Committee, New York. September, 1932. Pp. 1-12.

We regret that this pamphlet is issued anonymously, like others recently put out. Though we profess sympathy with some of the aims of the Committee, we believe that signed articles will be more effective and less open to criticism. The present pamphlet exhibits correspondence which, if authentic, shows what has been taking place and who is responsible. What a shame it is that our national parks can be controlled in any way by commercial interests! There can be no doubt that the Yellowstone Park colony of White Pelicans is being "controlled", though we are not prepared to claim that it is being *reduced* below a certain number from year to year. No doubt the colony would increase if allowed to. We visited the Molly Islands in 1927. The men of the U. S. Bureau of Fisheries who were on the ground at that time were very open in their complaint of the pelicans, and gave the writer to understand that means were being found to keep the numbers down. The pamphlet suggests that the colony is "controlled" by destroying the eggs and clubbing the young birds. We believe the Emergency Committee is doing a great public service in bringing these matters to public attention, but we can not approve the practice of anonymity in the publications.—T. C. S.

PHYSIOLOGY OF THE TEMPERATURE OF BIRDS. By S. Prentiss Baldwin and S. Charles Kendeigh. Sci. Publ. Cleveland Mus. Nat. Hist., Vol. III, pp. i-x+1-196, pls. I-V, figs. 1-41, and frontispiece. Cleveland, Ohio, 1932.

In this study of the physiology of the temperature of birds an attempt is made to analyze and determine both the external and internal factors in the control of body temperature, there being a constant interplay between those two sets of factors. The authors have devised new and elaborate mechanisms for their purposes. It was found that temperatures could be determined more accurately, as well as more easily, by thermocouples than by mercury thermometers.

There are many interesting facts connected with the physiology of body temperature of birds. As has long been known in the case of mammals, muscular activity is an important factor in body temperature. The authors think that if the body temperature of birds is higher in the summer than in the winter, the fact is to be explained by greater activity rather than by higher air temperature. Their data also lead to the conclusion that the incubation temperature is uniform throughout, that is, there is no increase in the body temperature of the sitting bird during the latter period of incubation.

The daily rhythm of the body temperature of an incubating bird is represented by a typical sigmoid curve, which seems to be an exaggeration of the corresponding air temperature curve, but is also indicative of relative metabolic activity. Moreover, this sigmoid curve of daily temperature may be reversed experimentally. By keeping birds in the dark during the daytime, thus subduing

normal activity, and then transferring them to a well illuminated room at night, a complete reversal of the temperature curve is effected; which, doubtless, also affects the entire metabolic routine. In the authors' repetition of this experiment they found a tendency toward mortality in the subjects, and suggested that "the reason for their dying may possibly have been a too precipitous reversal of the normal periods of activity". (Pp. 91-92). But if the reasoning here is sound, why should not mammals be similarly affected? And what bearing does all this have upon the night shifts of human labor? Well, who knows? (We note here a typographical error on page 92, line 12, where the figure reference should be 26 instead of 21).

The paper is too long to review thoroughly, but is full of interesting facts, and is another example of the modern trend in biological research, and, we may say, in ornithological research. Here is a great field for the young ornithologist of today.—T. C. S.

LIFE HISTORIES OF NORTH AMERICAN GALLINACEOUS BIRDS, ORDERS GALLIFORMES AND COLUMBIFORMES. By Arthur Cleveland Bent. United States National Museum Bulletin 162. Pp. i-ix+1-490. Plates 93.

This is the ninth of the excellent bulletins on the life histories of North American birds published by the United States National Museum, and follows the same general plan as its predecessors except that the present number combines the nomenclature of the 1931 Check-List of the American Ornithologists' Union with the arrangement of families and species as given in the old (1910) Check-List. Such a combination seems undesirable and likely to produce confusion. Once a nomenclature and arrangement of species and families have been adopted by a nationally recognized body such as the A. O. U., all serious papers in the field should make desperate efforts to conform.

A compilation of this kind and size must of necessity deal largely with generalizations. In this specific case, it is a pleasure to note the many citations of original literature. The stupendous task of collecting together and organizing this mass of notes on life histories has been accomplished in an unusually satisfactory manner. Any criticisms made here should not be allowed to detract from our debt to Mr. Bent and the National Museum for these studies. The 160 half-tone illustrations do much to make clear the text. All bird lovers should add this volume to their library while it is obtainable.

When Bent leaves descriptions of behavior and passes to interpretations, he passes into a field where his views can not be accepted with such assurance. For instance, on page 149, he speaks of the female Ruffed Grouse as "teaching them (the young) to scratch and hunt for insects", and later, he says, "they are taught to dust themselves". It may be questioned that the young are actually taught these things. On the other hand they may be doing these things from instinct. The only way to settle a point of this kind is to raise Ruffed Grouse in an incubator and find out whether young so raised dust themselves and scratch or whether they do not. If, when they are raised in an incubator, they scratch and dust themselves, they certainly do this without being taught by their mother. Similar interpretations scattered throughout the paper are subject to the same type of criticism.—JESSE M. SHAVER.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF BIRD-LIFE IN GUATEMALA. A CONTRIBUTION TO A STUDY OF THE ORIGIN OF CENTRAL AMERICAN BIRD-LIFE. By Ludlow Griscom. Bull. Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist., Vol. LXIV, pp. 1-430. New York, 1932.

This excellent study is dedicated to the memory of Jonathan Dwight, Jr., because Dr. Dwight had been deeply interested in the bird life of Central America, and upon whose collections the present report is chiefly based. Without attempting to describe the paper in detail we may say that it deals with the history of the ornithology of the region, with climate, physiography, life zones, and finally, with the distributional list of birds. The work shows all the evidence of being an accurate and authoritative treatise, and will be of great value to all who are concerned with the bird life of Central America.—T. C. S.

THE AUDUBON YEARBOOK (INDIANA) FOR 1932. Published by the Indiana Audubon Society, Indianapolis, 1932. Pp. 1-100. Price, \$1.00 (Miss Margaret R. Knox, Sec.-Treas., 4030 Park Ave., Indianapolis, Ind.).

We have learned to look for interesting material within the covers of this annual, and the present one is no exception to the rule. The volume is dedicated to Dr. Amos William Butler, who might be called the Father of Indiana Ornithology, because he began writing on Indiana birds away back in the '80's, and has never since lost his interest in this pursuit; and, in 1897, he published a complete treatise on the birds of Indiana, which has not been superseded as yet. The portrait of Dr. Butler is presented as a frontispiece, and is followed by a biography prepared by the late Dr. Barton W. Evermann, formerly of Indiana. There is also attached a complete bibliography of Dr. Butler's writings up to date. In connection with a short paper by Mr. O. M. Schantz on the sand dunes there is printed a list of the birds of that region. Because of the popularity of the Indiana dunes this list might well be republished sometime in annotated form. Dr. Earl Brooks continues his ana on the Robin, including such topics as unusual nest sites, various psychological traits, intoxication, bigamy, bathing, number of broods, nest parasitism, albinism, melanism, etc. Dr. Brooks' address is Noblesville, Ind. Mr. George Zebrowski presents a very full and instructive paper on the parasites (internal and external) of birds.—T. C. S.

BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIR OF ROBERT RIDGWAY, 1850-1929. By Alexander Wetmore. Biographical Memoirs, Vol. XV, Nat. Acad. Sci, 1932, pp. 55-101. Washington, D. C.

We find here the most important biography of Mr. Ridgway which has thus far appeared, next to the one by Mr. Harry Harris, published in the *Condor* (January, 1928). We did not realize until we checked up at this time, that no memorial sketch has thus far appeared in the *Auk*. A complete bibliography of Mr. Ridgway's work is given; and one may be surprised to find how interesting a personal bibliography can be.—T. C. S.

THE NEED FOR STUDIES IN BIRD CONTROL IN CALIFORNIA. By W. L. McAtee. Month. Bull. Calif. Dept. Agric., XXI, April-May-June, 1932, pp. 269-286.

It seems strange that so many birds become pests in California. In the present paper birds classified as pests (under certain circumstances in California) include ducks, coots, quail, band-tailed pigeons, horned larks, blackbirds, goldfinches, English sparrows and linnets, Gambel's sparrows, and possibly one or two others. On page 279 the report states that "a survey of 53 orchards has just been

completed which shows an average loss of 10 per cent for 1930". This is about the same estimate of loss that is claimed from insects. So, economically they would not be any worse off if they killed all the birds and kept the insects. The claims made by fruit growers and others are startling enough; but all such testimony may be assumed to be prejudiced, and perhaps exaggerated—and it may only be published as a justification for practices. Action should be based wholly upon the reports of the Survey's men, or others without prejudice. The author concludes with an argument for the use of poison as the method of control. Much effort is being made to show that the poison method is selective and discriminative, that the harmful species and individuals only will take the poison.—T. C. S.

PROGRESS REPORT OF THE RUFFED GROUSE INVESTIGATION. By Gardiner Bump, F. C. Edminster, Jr., Robert Darrow, W. C. Ritter, and A. A. Allen. Reprinted from the 21st Annual Report, for 1931, Conservation Dep't, Albany, N. Y., 1932. Pp. 1-19.

Much attention is being given nowadays to the problems of all species of game birds. Many states are supporting scientific investigation on the habits and requirements of certain species especially desired for hunting purposes. One useful table in this paper shows the nature of the food of the Ruffed Grouse month by month throughout the year; percentages are not given, however. From observations at the disposal of the authors it is concluded that grouse abundance fluctuates on a ten-year cycle.—T. C. S.

ORNITHOLOGY OF THE ONEIDA LAKE REGION: WITH REFERENCE TO THE LATE SPRING AND SUMMER SEASONS. By Dayton Stoner. *Roosevelt Wild Life Annals*, Vol. 2, Nos. 3-4, January, 1932, pp. 267-764, col. pls. 1-2, figs. 117-234.

One is likely to expect this report to deal chiefly with local distribution, but, as a matter of fact, one finds that more attention is paid to the habits of the various species treated; and for this reason the paper will have a general appeal. Two colored plates are by Sawyer, whose skill in placing many small figures on one plate is well known.—T. C. S.

BIRDS COLLECTED IN CUBA AND HAITI BY THE PARISH-SMITHSONIAN EXPEDITION OF 1930. By Alexander Wetmore. *Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus.*, Vol. 81, Art. 2, pp. 1-40, pls. 1-7. Washington, 1932.

The expedition went by ship among various small islands adjacent to Cuba and Haiti, and the paper is a report on the birds collected, including land birds. An outline map of the territory covered would have been a great convenience to the reader.—T. C. S.

PROGRESS REPORT OF OHIO UPLAND GAME BIRD RESEARCH. By Lawrence E. Hicks. Reprinted from *Trans. 18th Amer. Game Conf.*, 1931, pp. 1-5.

The matter presented here will be of interest to all who are engaged in game management.—T. C. S.

BULLETIN OF THE ESSEX COUNTY ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB OF MASSACHUSETTS. Salem, 1931. Pp. 1-71. Price, 50 cents (S. Gilbert Emilio, Treasurer, 7 Winter St., Salem, Mass.).

The principal paper in this issue of this Bulletin is a revised "List of the Birds of Essex County, Massachusetts", which includes 336 forms, with a supplementary list of twenty-nine forms. This is a splendid way to publish local lists. A dozen other articles of interest are included.—T. C. S.

RESEARCH AND EDUCATION IN THE NATIONAL PARKS. By Harold C. Bryant and Wallace W. Atwood, Jr. Issued by the National Park Service, Washington, D. C., 1932. Pp. i-vi+1-66.

A splendidly illustrated pamphlet describing the educational work attempted by the Government in the Parks, and giving a history of the development of this work. A useful bibliography is appended.—T. C. S.

A REVISED LIST OF THE BIRDS OF OHIO. Compiled by Milton B. Trautman. Bull. Bureau Sci. Research, Div. of Conservation, Ohio Dep't of Agric., Vol. I, No. 3, April, 1932, pp. 1-16.

A rather hastily edited, but modernized, list of birds for the state, which will be very useful to all Ohio bird students.—T. C. S.

POLICIES OF THE BUREAU OF BIOLOGICAL SURVEY RELATIVE TO THE CONTROL OF INJURIOUS BIRDS. Prepared under direction of Paul G. Redington and W. L. McAtee. Misc. Publ. No. 145, U. S. Dept. Agric., Washington, D. C., 1932.

It is stated herein that the general policy of the Survey is "to hold bird-control work to a minimum". There follows a brief discussion of the various kinds of birds which may become injurious. The Biological Survey is often placed in a difficult position between conflicting demands. We hope that its practices will always tally with its declarations of policy.—T. C. S.

QUAIL WINTER FOOD AND COVER. By Paul L. Errington. Reprinted from Amer. Game, three numbers from July to December, 1931.

This reprint combines three instalments as originally published. It is a full official report of the Wisconsin Quail Investigation during the winter of 1930-31. Many interesting facts on the ecology of the Bob-white are here presented. The gist of it all is that these birds must have both food and shelter—the lack of either means disaster.—T. C. S.

DIE VÖGEL NORDOSTGRÖNLANDS ZWISCHEN 73° 00' UND 75° 30' N BR. By Bernt Løppenthin, of Copenhagen. C. A. Reitzel's Press, Copenhagen, 1932. Price, 6 Kroner.

During the summer of 1930 the Danish Godthaab Expedition spent six weeks on the east coast of Greenland. The author of this volume, who was Zoologist for the Expedition, devoted most of his time to the birds, and obtained first-hand information on the birds between 73° 30' and 74° 20', North; but with information gained from the inhabitants he was able to report on the range indicated in the title. The volume contains a concise story of the movements of the Expedition a discussion of the forty species of birds found, and an adequate summary of both these parts in English. The text is supplemented with twenty-six text figures and one insert map.—HENRY C. RATH.

AVIFAUNA AEGYPTIACA. NATATORES, STEGANOPODES, URINATORES. By Alexander Koenig, of Bonn. Journ. f. Ornith., Special Number, 1932. Pp. 1-237.

The present one is the final instalment in a series, the first of which was completed in 1905. The title is slightly at fault, the author suggests, since, with two exceptions, the work deals only with the birds of the Nile Valley. The two exceptions refer to the birds of the Fayum Oasis and those of Sinai. Were it not for these exceptions a more appropriate title, he thinks, would have been, Avifauna Nilotica Aegyptiaca. Only genera and species are described. A total of

257 species, with many additional subspecies, are described in the work; while 38 species are discussed in the present instalment. Because human influence and natural events are producing rapid changes in the environment, the author reminds the reader that the picture which he here presents can be regarded only as a temporary one.—HENRY C. RATH.

EL TROUBADOUR. THE TEXAS MOCKINGBIRD. By R. A. Selle. Houston, Texas (1236 Rutland St.), 1932. Pp. 1-32.

Five delightful essays on the Mockingbird, all short, make this little booklet a prized possession. Anyone will enjoy this eulogy of the chosen bird of the state of Texas.—T. C. S.

FOODS OF SOME PREDATORY FUR-BEARING ANIMALS IN MICHIGAN. By Ned Dearborn. Bull. No. 1, School of Forestry and Conservation, Univ. Mich., Ann Arbor, Mich., 1932. Pp. 1-52, figs. 8, maps 10, charts 22. Price, 25 cents.

This paper, which deals with fur rather than feathers, is the first of a proposed series of bulletins to be issued by the Michigan School of Forestry and Conservation. Special attention has been given to the food of a selected list of mammals; and, of course, birds are found listed in these food charts in many cases.—T. C. S.

The *Migrant* for June contains an article by Mr. A. F. Ganier on the eagles found in Tennessee reprinted from the Journal of the Tennessee Academy of Sciences for April, 1931. Mr. Bruce P. Tyler also tells of a pair of House Wrens which destroyed two nests (with contents) of the Bewick's Wren and drove them away.

The *Chickadee*, organ of the Forbush Bird Club, of Worcester, Mass., continues to reach our desk regularly. It carries much information of general interest, and should be very suggestive to the editors of other local club publications. The March number gives a list of trees, shrubs, and vines arranged according to the season (summer, autumn, winter, spring) in which their fruits are available as bird food. The July number gives a complete list of ornithological books in the local public library, with the call number for each one. This is a very fine list, but it should contain the *Condor* and WILSON BULLETIN. Other numbers are so full of facts and suggestions that enumeration would be quite impossible.

The St. Louis Bird Club issued two numbers (May and June) of a mimeographed periodical, the name of which was to be decided later. The pages serve to record the programs and field studies, and other matters of interest.

Bird banding periodicals. *Bird Banding Notes* is issued by the U. S. Bureau of Biological Survey. Since our last report the numbers for December, 1931, and May, 1932, have been issued. We have received *News from the Bird Banders* for October, 1931, January, April, and July, 1932; and also *Inland Bird Banding News* for March, June, and September, 1932.

The *Raven* has not missed an issue so far this year. This mimeographed Bulletin seems to restrict its space to actual news in the bird world as reported by the various active bird students in the state. The June issue presents an account of a three-day sojourn of a party of four in the Dismal Swamp.

The *Gull* for October reprints from the Game Breeder some interesting discussion on the question of how the Wood Duck's young leave the nest. The gist of it is that the young leave the nest, and are returned to the nest, on the back of the old bird. The author asserts that he has witnessed the performances.

The International Cat Society (501 Fifth Ave., N. Y.) issues from time to time a mimeographed bulletin which gives information on the harm done by these animals and on the work being done to curb the menace. Up to the present time ten bulletins have been issued.

Several numbers of the *Flicker* have arrived since last noticed. The second number for 1932 contains a halftone reproduction of a *very excellent* photograph of a Great Horned Owl at the nest.

For some years Prof. O. A. Stevens, of the North Dakota Agricultural College, has been issuing in mimeographed form *North Dakota Bird Notes*. This periodical has been issued with considerable regularity for a number of years, and contains a great amount of local ornithology.

It has been announced that the *Letter of Information* of the Nebraska Ornithologists' Union is to be discontinued at the end of this year, to be succeeded by a printed 16-page quarterly.

COMMUNICATIONS

RIDGWAY'S BIRDS OF NORTH AND MIDDLE AMERICA

With regard to an editorial on Mr. Robert Ridgway's great series on the Birds of North and Middle America in the last number of the *WILSON BULLETIN* (Vol. 44, September, 1932, p. 179) there seems to be some misunderstanding as to the circumstances attending the progress of this publication.

At the time of his death Mr. Ridgway was occupied mainly with work on the synonymy and on the diagnoses for the higher groups for volumes 9 and 10 of this work. Neither of these volumes was completed and we estimate that approximately 50 per cent or less of the work had been finished on them. Due to his failing health Mr. Ridgway did not feel that he could come to Washington to carry out the necessary work to complete the accounts of the various species and subspecies, and it was not practical for him to arrange to do this elsewhere. As a matter of fact Mr. Ridgway wished to give up the task some time before his death and continued only at my earnest solicitation, as it was my desire to have as much of his rich store of knowledge preserved on paper as possible.

The work of completion of these two volumes has been undertaken by Dr. Herbert Friedmann, U. S. National Museum, who follows Mr. Ridgway as curator of birds. While it is intended to complete the work as promptly as possible necessarily some time must elapse before the next volume is ready as there is much to be done upon it.

ALEXANDER WETMORE,
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