

## COMMUNICATIONS

June 22, 1936.

*To the Editor:*

Although I am no longer living in the Yellowstone Park, my attention is always attracted to articles pertaining to birds of that region. In fact, I have been for the last thirty years listing in my Yellowstone Bird Bibliography all articles I could find mentioning even one bird in that Park. Hence, my interest in Mr. Crook's article on pages 136-137 of the June WILSON BULLETIN. If you will look up page 128 of The Condor, Vol. XXXI, No. 3, May-June, 1929, you will find that there is an item there recording the discovery of the "Double-crested Cormorant in Yellowstone National Park", on July 20, 1928. Apparently these were the same birds, and the same nest, seen later that year by Dr. Kelly. As to whether *auritus* or *albobiliatus* is the correct form, can not yet be decided definitely because no one has taken a specimen at Yellowstone Lake. According to the 4th edition of the A. O. U. Check-List, *albobiliatus* is the Pacific Coast form whereas *auritus* is the eastern form. From my knowledge of the region, I believe that the cormorant came from the east (plains) first to the lake backed up by the dam above Cody, Wyoming, and then westward to the Yellowstone Lake. Bent gives *auritus* as the breeding form at Buffalo, Wyoming, and Great Salt Lake, although he later says the Great Salt Lake birds may be intermediate.

So far as Black Ducks in the Yellowstone are concerned, I have in my own notes: "On August 7, 1922, I saw four very black ducks on Mt. Everts, but I assumed that they were dark members of the mallard species because I did not care to assume the responsibility of adding such a new species to the list on sight identification." Both Mr. Crook's ducks and mine were in northern Wyoming, but very close to the southern boundary of Montana. Wilbur C. Knight, in his "The Birds of Wyoming", does not list the Black Duck. Grave and Walker, in their "Wyoming Birds", admit it only to their Hypothetical List. Aretas A. Saunders, in his "A Distributional List of the Birds of Montana", does not admit the Black Duck even to his Hypothetical List. In the absence of authentic records from both States, would it not be better to await actual specimens before recording this species as present on the authority of sight records? I think I am fairly liberal in admitting the validity of sight records in very many instances, but my own hesitancy in recording the Black Duck after twenty-four (in 1922) years' experience with Yellowstone birds shows that I did not then consider myself qualified to record it on a sight record.

Yours truly,

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M. P. SKINNER.