

**ORNITHOLOGICAL LITERATURE**

ADVENTURES IN BIRD PROTECTION. By Thomas Gilbert Pearson. D. Appleton-Century Co., New York. 1937. Pp. i-xiv+1-459. Price, \$3.50.

Dr. Pearson's presentation of this autobiography is a very happy and instructive contribution to the cause of conservation. The entire book is virtually a history of bird protection in this country. While no movement is treated in detail, nearly every one is mentioned with dates and general implications. The author will be granted the privilege of recording the history of events as he has seen them and interpreted them. Naturally his slant may not always be the same as that of people who held different views on the particular problem discussed. All history is written in that way, and with the same limitations.

We see about three general features in this book, namely, the factual account of Dr. Pearson's life, the factual account of bird protection history, and the interplay of these two series of events upon each other, which the reader must more or less interpret for himself. It is germane to bring in Pearson's early boyhood life in Florida, disclosing his innate love for nature; and his college life in North Carolina, with no deviation from the original bent. Each succeeding stage of the story seems to reveal the unfolding with precision of what might seem to be a predestined career. And of his career during these early years the author himself says that he passed through the stages of "an egg-collector, a bird-collector, a college professor of biology, a summer school teacher of bird study, an amateur nature photographer, and a student of hunting methods in many fields."

From the pages we glean that there have been stages in bird protection history when ornithological powers have been faint-hearted. For example, in 1898, when Senator George F. Hoar introduced in the United States Senate a bill to prohibit the importation and sale of feathers for millinery uses, the A. O. U. Committee on Bird Protection refused to lend its support to the bill (p. 260).

Again, Dr. Pearson gives some account of the preliminary negotiations for the bird protection treaty with Great Britain and Canada, wherein he describes the great opposition to the prohibition of spring shooting of ducks. Fear of this opposition led the Chief of the U. S. Biological Survey and the Directors of the National Association of Audubon Societies to assent to the elimination of the spring shooting clause (by setting the closing date forward from February 1 to March 10). Later it was learned that the public opposition to the spring shooting clause was local and not so formidable as had been supposed, but the treaty had then been returned to Canada and could not be recalled (pp. 283-287).

Dr. Pearson's discussion of bag-limit legislation is interesting and illuminating, but does not clarify the opposition of the Biological Survey and the Audubon Association to the Haugen bag-limit reduction bill (H. R. 5287) in 1930, one year before the bag-limit on ducks was reduced from twenty-five to fifteen.

Nevertheless, in spite of all such controversial entanglements over questions which made agreement difficult, the history of the Audubon movement is one of progress and achievement. The record must be read for an appreciation of this fact. Aside from Dr. Pearson's services in promoting desirable legislation for the protection of game and non-game animals, it seems to us that his greatest accomplishment has been in the erection of ample financial resources for the permanent uses of the Association. It is also generally conceded that the organization of the International Committee on Bird Protection has been a splendid step in general conservation, and that its results are likely to be more far-reaching than can now be realized.—T. C. S.

AUDUBON, AN INTIMATE LIFE OF THE AMERICAN WOODSMAN. By Stanley Clisby Arthur. Harmanson, Publisher. New Orleans, 1937. Pp. 1-517. 66 illustrations. Price, \$5.00.

Those who have kept track of the literature must have wondered at the number of biographies of Audubon which have appeared in very recent years. It can scarcely be because of his scientific attainments, for this world of people is not so greatly interested in scientific progress nor in the lives of those who make it. It must be that the personal side of Audubon's life makes an unusual appeal. His life story does present mystery, romance, adventure, conflict, devotion to purpose, failure, success, and other extremes of various sorts. Peattie's biography of Audubon we would characterize as impressionistic, and highly skillful and entertaining from that angle. Arthur's biography is strictly factual and informative, in that respect resembling Professor Herrick's work. It differs from earlier biographies in being less flattering and adulatory. In appraisal the author is fair and respectful, but not obsequious. He does not hesitate to show the weakness as well as the strength of his subject. And the reader is usually satisfied to learn that his hero is human after all. One thing is made clear, that Audubon would have been helpless in literary production without the aid of his editors. And there is evidence that the editors were not always careful in transmitting the facts without distortion. The question of Audubon's birth origin is discussed at considerable length. In spite of the discovery by Professor Herrick of certain data to show Audubon's birth in Santo Domingo in 1785, and the acceptance of such conclusion by the Encyclopaedia Britannica, the idea is now suggested that Audubon may have been in fact the second son of Louis XVI of France and Marie Antoinette—the lost Dauphin. Nothing but circumstantial evidence is offered for this claim, of course. The author's part in this book has been well done, and the same may be said for the printer; but the binder has done a woeful job, probably from picayunish economy. The book is well supplied with illustrations, including a very good collection of Audubon portraits.—T. C. S.

CHECK-LIST OF BIRDS OF THE WORLD. Volume III. By James Lee Peters. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass. 1937. Pp. i-xiii+1-311. Price, \$3.50.

The public is by this time familiar with the plan of this work, which is being issued at intervals of two or three years. This third volume treats of two orders, Columbiformes and Psittaciformes; the former including the sand grouse, dodos, fruit pigeons, doves, etc., and the latter including the parrots. The publisher's announcement states that the volume "covers 142 genera and approximately 1675 forms", a very large number of which are subspecies. While these two large groups of birds hold less interest, perhaps, for the average North American bird student, they are important, and the forms are far more numerous than ordinary ornithologists probably realize. As each volume is added the series becomes more impressive.—T. C. S.

LIFE HISTORIES OF NORTH AMERICAN BIRDS OF PREY. Order Falconiformes (Part 1). By Arthur Cleveland Bent. U. S. Nat. Mus. Bull. 167. Washington, 1937. Pp. i-viii+1-409. Pls. 101. Price, 70 cents.

This tenth number in the series treats of the condors, vultures, kites, darters, buzzards, eagles, harriers, and ospreys; the falcons are not included in this number. The plan of the volume is essentially the same as its predecessors. The accounts of several species have been written by others than Mr. Bent.—T. C. S.

STUDIES ON THE MUSCLES OF THE PELVIC APPENDAGE IN BIRDS. By George Elford Hudson. Amer. Midl. Nat. (Notre Dame, Ind.) Vol. 18, No. 1, Jan., 1937, pp. 1-108.

This anatomical study stands out prominently, because so little work has been done in this field during the past quarter of a century. But, in addition, the work is notable for its extensiveness and thoroughness. Only the musculature of the pelvic appendages is studied. These muscles are described and figured in detail. Altogether, the leg muscles of thirty-five species, distributed in sixteen orders, have been examined. Numerous additional species are mentioned in the text. However, all figures are made from the crow, of which forty specimens were examined. Careful comparisons are made with the works of Shufeldt, Gadow, and others. It is a matter of some interest that Hudson preserved his material in a mixture of one part of forty percent formaldehyde with eight parts of water—a stronger mixture than is ordinarily used. Specimens were thoroughly injected with this preservative, and immersed in it for keeping.—T. C. S.

TEN YEARS' RETURNS FROM BANDED BANK SWALLOWS. By Dayton Stoner. Circ. 18, N. Y. State Museum. January, 1937.

Dr. Stoner banded a total of 4,925 Bank Swallows from 1923 to 1935, inclusive, of which 3,044 were young, and 1,881 were adult. From these, 99 returns were secured, 31 young and 68 adults. Seventy-five per cent of the adult returns were recovered in the native colony, while only 19.3 per cent of the young were recovered in the native colony. The author also found that out of ten cases no pairs remained mated during a second season. He also finds that relatively few Bank Swallows attain the age of four years.—T. C. S.

A KEY FOR THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE NESTS AND EGGS OF OUR COMMON BIRDS. By Howard Jones, M. D. Published by the Author (Circleville, Ohio). 1927. Pp. 1-44

We overlooked this brochure at the time of its publication, and do not know the price, but it can probably be obtained from the author. At the time of writing the author stated that only two keys for the identification of the nests and eggs of American birds were in print, one being by H. D. Minot in 1877, the other being by Dr. Howard Jones in 1886. The present key is one for the eggs, although the nests are described in each case, and would help to clinch the identification of the eggs. One hundred and twenty-six species are treated in the key. Dr. Howard Jones is one of our nestors in ornithology, having now passed his eighty-first birthday; and he began collecting birds' eggs when he was six years old. In his earlier days he wrote the text for "The Illustrations of the Nests and Eggs of the Birds of Ohio".—T. C. S.

BIRDS OF THE SOUTHWEST. By Charles Edward Howard Aiken. Colorado College Publ., Gen. Series, No. 212, pp. 1-73. 1937.

In this report we find a list of birds composed mainly of those seen by Mr. Aiken on a wagon trip from Colorado southwestward into New Mexico and Arizona in the year 1876. The report also contains a good deal of narrative material relating to Aiken's long trip, and to shorter ones. A map is included to show the route of the longer trip.—T. C. S.

FOOD HABITS OF MARSH HAWKS IN THE GLACIATED PRAIRIE REGION OF NORTH-CENTRAL STATES. By Paul L. Errington and W. J. Breckenridge. Reprinted from Amer. Midl. Natl., Vol. 17, 1936, pp. 831-848.

FOOD HABITS OF MID-WEST FOXES. By Paul L. Errington. Reprinted from Journ. Mammalogy, Vol. 16, 1935, pp. 192-200.

The latter paper is based on the examination of stomach contents and fecal samples from both red and gray foxes. Remains were found of numerous kinds of wild birds, for example: Blue Jay, Bob-white, Crow, Meadowlark, Red-winged Blackbird, Robin, Catbird, House Wren, Horned Lark, Long-eared Owl, Horned Owl, Mourning Dove, Bittern, Canada Goose, Pintail, Blue-winged Teal, among many other things, of course. One of the author's conclusions is that "With respect to winter bob-white, fox pressure appears rather confined to that proportion of the population which the environment does not easily accommodate."—T. C. S.

THE COMPOSITION AND DYNAMICS OF A BEECH-MAPLE CLIMAX COMMUNITY. By Arthur B. Williams. Sci. Publ. Cleveland Mus. Nat. Hist.

An excellent ecological study of a tract of land sixteen miles northwest of Cleveland, Ohio. On pages 57-70 the bird life of the area is discussed. A total of eighty-three species are given in the lists. Twenty-nine breeding species are named for the season of 1934.—T. C. S.

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The *Nebraska Bird Review* for January, 1937 (V, No. 1) gives a list of wild fruits used by birds in central Nebraska. This paper, by Glenn Viehmeyer, is based upon actual observations on the feeding activities of the birds, or analysis of their droppings. In addition there are nine pages of general notes and eight pages of migration notes.

The *Florida Naturalist* for July, 1936 (IX, No. 4) contains an interesting report of a conflict between a black snake and a Great Horned Owl. The snake appeared to have the best of the fight, and, to give the owl a better chance, both were collected and preserved. The April number (1937, X, No. 3) is mainly a record of the Annual Meeting of the Society and reports of officers. A short note reports an attack of a civet cat on a Clapper Rail.

In *Iowa Bird Life* for December, 1936 (VI, No. 4), Mr. Fred J. Pierce gives a summary of the observations made in Iowa in 1843 by John J. Audubon. There is also a synopsis of bird records previously published in the mimeographed letters of the I. O. U. The issue for March, 1937 (VII, No. 1), carries an article by Messrs. Friley and Hendrickson on the nesting of the Eared Grebe in Clay County, Iowa. Mr. and Mrs. M. I. Jones write on banding experiences. A number of short notes indicate that another invasion of Iowa by Magpies took place in the early winter of 1936-1937.

The *Migrant* for March (1937, VIII, No. 1) contains a short paper on the Raven, by Bruce P. Tyler; a catalogue of Tennessee's Wildwood Parks (with map), by A. F. Ganier; and miscellaneous short notes.

The *Bird Calendar* of the Cleveland Bird Club (32d year, No. 3, 1936) contains various breeding and census lists, while the closing number for the year (No. 4) follows a similar plan of contents.

In the *Raven* for September-October (VII, Nos. 9-10, 1936) Dr. Murray presents a fourth paper in his series of "Some Virginia Ornithologists", this one being on William Palmer. The fifth instalment is a sketch of Col. Wirt Robinson, and is found in the November-December number. The January number (VIII, No. 1, 1937) presents a list of birds observed in the vicinity of Blacksburg. The February-March number (VIII, Nos. 2 and 3) reports a number of interesting local records, and has also a radio talk by Mr. Ralph M. Brown.

The *Night Heron* is a mimeographed periodical published in St. Louis for the promotion of local ornithological interest. The Spring (1936) number contains a list of the birds found at Creve Coeur Lake. We also acknowledge the Winter number for 1936-37.

The *Audubon Annual Bulletin* for 1937 is presented as Number 27, by the Illinois Audubon Society. In it Mrs. M. M. Nice writes of some of her opportunities for bird banding. Mr. B. T. Gault gives some reminiscences of early experiences in the Chicago area. Mr. W. I. Lyon reports the first recorded nesting of the Common Tern in Illinois. Other notes and miscellaneous information are also included.

The *Annual Bulletin* for 1936 of the Toledo Naturalists' Association comes this time with a novel cover design in color. It is issued early in the year and gives a tentative program of work for each month of 1937. The remaining forty mimeographed pages present local contributions. Price, 50 cents.

Mr. Irl Rogers in the *News from the Bird Banders* for December (1936, XI, No. 4) gives directions, with diagrams, for constructing a new type of bird trap which has been very successful. In the February issue (1937, XII, No. 1) Mr. Rogers reports that in one day he trapped and banded 118 Gambel's Sparrows. We have long admired the format and mimeograph work on this periodical. The pages are of letter size (8.5x11 inches), with perforations and rounded corners, indicating that the sheets are die-cut. The paper has an absorbent quality which gives good printing effects, and the printing is done on both sides of the sheet. Recently we found in our 10-cent stores a very substantial binder which exactly fitted these holes. One canvas-covered binder sold for twenty-five cents, and another paper-covered one sold for twenty cents. Even some for ten cents were available. Now we find it possible to preserve the issues in the correct order and accessible. Any little contrivance of this sort which will encourage members to preserve their mimeographed periodicals should be of interest to societies which issue them. The May number (XII, No. 2) contains a statistical report for the year 1936, which shows that a total of 37,951 birds of 221 species were banded.

The *Inland Bird Banding News* for September (1936, VIII, No. 3) contains a report of Mr. W. I. Lyon's thirteenth annual bird banding expedition, and numerous shorter notes. The December number (VIII, No. 4) carries the minutes of the Fifteenth Annual Meeting, and an article on the molting of the Savannah Sparrow. In the March number (1937, IX, No. 1) we find a paper by Prof. O. A. Stevens on the progress of banding work in North Dakota, as well as reports on the returns of various species in Michigan.