

ORNITHOLOGICAL LITERATURE

BIRDS OF THE SOUTHWEST PACIFIC. A FIELD GUIDE TO THE BIRDS OF THE AREA BETWEEN SAMOA, NEW CALEDONIA, AND MICRONESIA. By Ernst Mayr. Macmillan Co., N.Y., 1945:5 × 7½ in., xix + 316 pp., 3 col. pls., 16 figs., 1 map. \$3.75.

The war has greatly broadened the horizons of American bird students. Most of us now have relatives or friends living in the south Pacific on islands of whose very existence we were hardly aware a few months ago. As a result, there has been a tremendous increase of interest in the fauna of these islands, and museums have had many requests for information. In response to this demand, Ernst Mayr, the leading authority on the birds of the southwest Pacific, has prepared this excellent field guide. He describes the 388 species and lists the 415 additional subspecies of birds that are known to occur on the following groups of islands: Samoa, Tonga, Fiji, New Caledonia, Loyalty, New Hebrides, Banks, Santa Cruz, Solomon, Marshall, Caroline, Mariannas, and Palau. It should be emphasized that, although the book will be useful to visitors to almost any part of the southwest Pacific, it does not attempt to treat the avifaunas of the Philippines, New Guinea, or even the Bismarcks.

The author has solved very cleverly the difficult problems presented by the necessity of describing the varied bird faunas of a dozen archipelagos. The wide-ranging sea birds and shore birds are covered in the first two chapters. Then a chapter is devoted to a very good family-by-family description of the land and fresh-water birds of the whole area. The rest of the book treats consecutively the land and fresh-water birds of seven geographical subdivisions. The avifaunas of many islands are separately listed in the most condensed form possible by using only the serial numbers of the species (as given in the preceding account). In this ingenious fashion all the known resident birds of Guadalcanal, for example, are listed in five lines. For most of the archipelagos the author gives a brief history of the ornithological exploration and references to pertinent scientific papers.

The three color plates by Jaques depict 37 species, including at least one representative of each of the more characteristic bird families of the region. In addition, Alexander Seidel has contributed very good black and white drawings of 23 other species. The original paintings were excellent, but they have not been particularly well reproduced, and the printing of the explanatory legends many pages away from the plates will interfere with their convenient use.

Fortunately the author calls attention to the great need for information on the habitats and ecological relations of these birds. An outline in the introductory section and additional indications all through the text will show any interested amateur how to make important contributions to scientific knowledge.

This volume will be invaluable to any naturalist stationed in the southwest Pacific and will provide a tremendous stimulus to ornithological research in the area for many years to come.—J. Van Tyne.

WOODCOCK. By John Alden Knight. Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1944:5½ × 8½ in., x + 161 + ii pp., 6 col. pls., 17 photographs. \$4.00.

This is the first strictly popular book dealing solely with the American Woodcock. However, ornithologists will readily question whether it is, as the publishers claim, the first "full and up-to-date account" of the species. The book is written specifically for sportsmen. Four of the eleven chapters deal with hunting methods and equipment, dogs, guns, and suitable cover for good shooting. The other chapters, except two which are anecdotal in character, give a popularized résumé of recent findings on the habits, life cycle, migration, and ecological relationships of the species. The chapter on "Fight for Survival" is a laudably clear-minded appraisal of the Woodcock's precarious status as a game bird.

Persons desiring authoritative information on Woodcock hunting will find the book of real worth; serious students of birds and game management will obtain little, if any, important information about the bird that is not already available in papers published during the last six years. The book is illustrated with six handsome color plates from paintings by Edgar Burke and seventeen photographs. There is a brief index, but there is neither a bibliography nor a direct acknowledgement of the publications which were the source of much of the information.—Olin Sewall Pettingill, Jr.

THE PRAIRIE CHICKEN IN MISSOURI. By Charles W. Schwartz. Missouri Conservation Commission, Jefferson City, Missouri, 1944: 9 × 12 in., 176 pp., 85 pls. (1 col.), 1 map. \$5.00.

"The Prairie Chicken in Missouri" is primarily a book of photographs with just enough text to suggest interpretation and link them together. It is a charming book—in this respect, perhaps more than in any other, it differs from the usual management book and from most species studies. The natural simplicity of the author's style makes for good reading, and he has succeeded in touching on most of the salient points of Prairie Chicken life history and management in Missouri. "The photographs were selected from many hundreds taken." It might also have been added that the text has been similarly selected from a wealth of information and direct observation not included in the book. The short, direct statements tend to carry equal weight. Had they been expanded, some would have gained by qualification, and others would have led to interesting channels for speculation.

Schwartz is not alone in describing the booming call as three ascending notes; however, the many Prairie Chickens I have listened to in Wisconsin habitually had the second note of the call the lowest.

The photographs of Prairie Chicken life history, including a spectacular series on courtship, are beautiful. Not only is each photograph a trophy, but no phase of the Prairie Chicken's elaborate courtship display is omitted.

The use of pictures in this book as a technique of conservation education is unparalleled and stimulating. It seems unfortunate, therefore, that "The Prairie Chicken in Missouri," even before publication, was considered in the limited edition class.—Frances Hamerstrom.

GAME BIRDS OF AMERICA. Figured by Lynn Bogue Hunt. Text by Ray P. Holland. Field and Stream, New York, 1944: 13 × 16 in., 12 colored plates, 24 text pages. \$5.00 (Agent: Frank J. Lowe, 80 West 40th St., New York 18).

The twelve color plates in this portfolio figure thirty-eight species of game birds: five geese, eighteen ducks, two doves, six quail, five grouse, the Turkey, and the Woodcock. Both male and female are pictured in twenty-five species in which the sexes are differently plumaged.

As usual, the artist has been handicapped by the necessity of placing a number of species on nearly every plate, but the grouping has been wisely done, and the species on most plates belong together ecologically. In the case of the "Lesser Geese," the best picture in the series, the result is completely convincing. The colors of the plates are pleasing, and ornithologists will probably feel that most of the bird colors are well within the range of variation allowed to artists and printers. The only marked exception is that commonly misrepresented bird, the Band-tailed Pigeon.

The plates, apparently intended for framing, are printed without legends. Brief accounts of the species figured are given on the text pages beside small black and white copies of the plates. Bird students will find little new information in these brief columns, which were written primarily for hunters, but they will all be interested by the biographical sketch of the artist.—J. Van Tyne.

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PARASITES AND DISEASE

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ANATOMY (including plumage and molt)

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- FISHER, HARVEY I. Flying Ability and the Anterior Intermuscular Line on the Coracoid. *Auk*, 62, No. 1, Jan. 1945:125-129, 1 text fig.
- GLEGG, WILLIAM E. An Enquiry into the Scope and Significance of certain Latent or Subordinate Markings of Feathers of Birds on the British List. *Ibis*, 86, Oct., 1944:511-516.
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- ALDRICH, JOHN W. Notes on Panamanian Birds. *Auk*, 62, No. 1, Jan., 1945:111-114. (*Lochmias nematura nelsoni*, n. subsp.)
- ALLEN, A. A. Some Changes in the Bird Life of Churchill, Manitoba. *Auk*, 62, No. 1, Jan., 1945:129-134.
- BALDWIN, PAUL H. The Hawaiian Goose, Its Distribution and Reduction in Numbers. *Condor*, 47, No. 1, Jan.-Feb., 1945:27-37, figs. 7-8.
- BALL, STANLEY C. The European Starling in Gaspé. *Auk*, 62, No. 1, Jan., 1945: 79-97, pls. 6-7, 2 text figs.
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- WEBER, WALTER A. Wildlife of Tabasco and Veracruz. *Natl. Geogr. Mag.*, 87, No. 2, Feb., 1945:187-216, 16 col. pls., 7 photos, 1 map (35 bird species figured in color.)
- See also *Anatomy*: Fisher, 1944.

EVOLUTION AND SPECIATION

- CUSHING, JOHN E., JR. The Relation of Non-heritable Food Habits to Evolution. *Condor*, 46, No. 6, Nov.-Dec., 1944:265-271.

MIGRATION AND FLIGHT

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- BRACKBILL, HERVEY. Red-eyed Vireo's incubation. *Auk*, 62, No. 1, Jan., 1945:148.
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See also *Evolution*: Cushing.

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AFFILIATED SOCIETIES

THE INLAND BIRD BANDING ASSOCIATION held no meeting in 1944, and the officers of the past year continue in office. As a cooperative project in 1944, the Association collected banding data on the Robin. Results of the study were published in the June, August, and October issues of the *Inland News*; 15,000 banded Robins were represented in the compilations.

The Association has continued during the year to distribute literature on banding to public schools. Between August 1940 and January 1944 such literature was sent in response to 225 requests from 37 states.

An exchange of news letters with the Eastern Bird Banding Association has proved of benefit to both organizations. All the members of each association receive both news letters, and thus a helpful exchange of ideas and information is maintained.—O. A. STEVENS, *Secretary*.

THE VIRGINIA SOCIETY OF ORNITHOLOGY found it impossible, because of war-time conditions, to hold an annual meeting in 1944. However, individual members and local groups have carried on their activities and observations, and *The Raven* has continued to appear with reports on new or rare bird visitors, census lists, and other notes. During the past year *The Raven* published "The Birds of Rockbridge County," an extended study by J. J. Murray.—FLORENCE S. HAGUE, *Secretary*.

ANNUAL REPORTS

REPORT OF THE TREASURER FOR 1944

Balance as shown by last report, dated Dec. 31, 1943 ...\$	593.31	
<i>Receipts</i> , Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, 1944		
Dues:		
Associate	1288.35	
Active	1178.85	
Sustaining	275.65	
Subscriptions to <i>The Wilson Bulletin</i>	223.65	
Sale of back numbers of <i>The Wilson Bulletin</i>	167.00	
Income from Endowment Fund	71.87	
Contribution for the printing of the colored plate	120.13	
Contributions and miscellaneous receipts	18.10	
Total receipts		\$3936.91
<i>Disbursements</i>		
The <i>Wilson Bulletin</i> : printing, engraving, mailing	\$ 1920.75	
Editor's expense: postage, mailing, secretarial aid	162.87	
Secretary's expense: stationery, postage, clerical aid	126.21	
Treasurer's expense: stationery, postage, printing, express charges	71.37	
Membership Committee expense: postage, printing	68.81	
Bank charges and foreign exchange	20.69	
Bad checks returned	27.00	
Reprints	7.21	
Incorporation fee	10.00	
Transferred to Endowment Fund account	1000.00	
Total disbursements		\$3414.91
Balance on hand in Ohio National Bank, Columbus		\$ 522.00