

ORNITHOLOGICAL LITERATURE

MODERN BIRD STUDY. By Ludlow Griscom. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1945: $5\frac{1}{8} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$ in., x + 190 pp., 15 photos, 10 maps and diagrams. \$2.50.

"Modern Bird Study" is a fine little book, and I have read it with the greatest interest from cover to cover. It is not simply about birds; it is not simply another "What bird is that?" book; it is about avian populations and all that the words imply: the adaptability of bird populations, their migrations, the routes that they take during their travels, and their distribution. The first five chapters—Development of Field Ornithology. Capacity and Intelligence of Birds. Adaptability of Birds. Migration: Causes and Origin. Migration: Factors and Routes—"will appeal to any layman with a general interest in birds," as Griscom says in his preface; "The chapters on distribution and classification are more technical. . . . The main object of the book . . . is to show that the study of birds is not only a branch of scientific research . . . but that it also contains many topics of interest to the layman, and that the growing army of bird watchers have and can really assist the ornithologist in solving problem after problem by controlled, careful, and thorough observation."

It is a delightfully made little book, too. It fits into the pocket, and I can think of nothing better to lighten a tiresome train journey. There are 15 unusual photographs by Cruickshank, A. A. Allen, Edith Sloan Griscom, and others, as well as 10 very helpful maps and diagrams. Useful references are given at the end of each chapter, and there is an adequate index. At first sight the text may seem short, but it is as packed with meat as the proverbial nut.

Of course, it is the part concerning distribution that interests me most, and the analysis here is really first rate. I was extremely interested to find that Griscom is much more sympathetic to J. A. Allen's postulates concerning North American geographical distribution than to C. H. Merriam's. In the chapter on classification, there is an excellent analysis of the question of superspecies and incipient species, as well as a clear, brief, easily understood discussion of sympatric and allopatric species; monotypic and polytypic species; and intergradation.

This is a hard book to review because I am tempted to give long quotations from it—which simply reiterates what I said before: it is a meaty little book. (At first sight I may seem biased because Ludlow Griscom is here at the Museum of Comparative Zoology, but I think probably it would be truer to say that I am hypercritical because the book is distinctly "up my alley.")—T. Barbour.

CHECK-LIST OF BIRDS OF THE WEST INDIES. 2nd ed. By James Bond. Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, 1945: 6×9 in., xiii + 182 pp., map. \$2.00.

At first glance the second edition of Bond's Check-List seems not to differ greatly from the original edition (1940) that was reviewed in this journal, vol. 53, p. 40, but a careful comparison of the two reveals numerous changes. In the first place, the preface has been enlarged and the lists of extinct and vanishing species revised; to the extinct birds is added *Columba inornata wetmorei* which has not been found since 1926; on the other hand, the number of birds that Bond believes may become extinct within the next hundred years has been reduced from thirteen to six. The list of rare or local forms has been omitted entirely.

A few species, reports of whose occurrence in the West Indies are now considered doubtful, have been dropped from the Check-List, and a few recent records (e.g. *Dendrocygna bicolor* from Cuba) added. A new feature is the inclusion

of the earliest dates of arrival and the latest dates of departure of the North American migrants. In the original edition, free use was made of footnotes to explain the author's views on relationships and derivations; in the second, this practice is amplified. It is interesting to note in the present edition that Bond has carried out certain changes which he tentatively proposed in the earlier edition; for instance, he unites *Nesophlox* with the Central American *Calliphlox*, places "*Calyppe*" *helenae* in *Mellisuga*, reduces the status of *Colaptes chrysocaulosus* to a race of *C. auratus*, and unites *Holoquiscalus* with *Quiscalus*. There can certainly be no serious objection to any of these proposals. On the nomenclatural side we find *Parula* replacing *Compsothlypis* (and the family called Parulidae) and *Spermophila* replacing *Sporophila*, since under the international code they are not preoccupied by *Parulus* and *Spermophilus* respectively.

This check-list is the culmination of many years of devotion to the ornithology of the West Indies, both in the field and in the museum; it will stand as authoritative for a long time to come.—J. L. Peters.

ATLAS OF AVIAN ANATOMY: OSTEOLOGY, ARTHROLOGY, MYOLOGY. By Frank Wilbut Chamberlain. Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station Memoir Bulletin 5, 1943 [1944]: 47 pp. of text, 95 pls. \$2:50.

Because the title of this book might prove misleading to some ornithologists, it seems advisable to mention briefly some of its inadequacies. It was prepared primarily for use in veterinary medicine and deals only with domestic types, such as chickens, geese, swans, and their close relatives. It is not, then, a general atlas, and it is in no true sense comparative. Its descriptions and terminology are not correlated with the recent anatomical work by Howell (*Auk*, 54, 1937:364-375; 55, 1938:71-81), nor with the muscular anatomy by Hudson (*Amer. Midl. Nat.*, 18, 1937:1-108), with its superior illustrations. Indeed, these and many other significant papers, for example, those of Gadow and Fürbringer, are not listed in the one-page bibliography. The plates showing bones could have been distinctly useful if more than a smattering of the topographical features had been labelled. These drawings do indicate the kind of bird involved, but unfortunately the illustrations of joints and muscles do not. These defects may not be of consequence when the work is used in vocational training, but the general zoologist can view only with regret the failure of the veterinary anatomist to correlate his work with that in broader fields.—Alden H. Miller.

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ANATOMY (including plumage and molt)

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"Age Groups and Longevity in the American Robin"—a Correction

Footnote 7, page 71 of the March (1945) *Wilson Bulletin* should read: "Nice (personal communication) estimated an average of 4.4 young per pair per season for *Turdus migratorius achrusterus* in Oklahoma."—Donald S. Farnier.