

Careful descriptions of the localities visited are given, with lists of the more conspicuous plants, while the life zones and their characteristic species of vertebrates are thoroughly discussed. The annotated list of birds numbers 103 species, and considerable space is allotted to accounts of the habits of those which are most abundant and characteristic. To quote the author, the attempt has been made to place emphasis upon the non-morphological or psychological characters of the species which are of late attracting more and more attention in zoological field work.

In addition to the birds, the reptiles and amphibians of the region are treated in this paper, the mammals having formed the subject of a previous contribution. Taken together they form a comprehensive biological survey of this interesting portion of Nevada, with much valuable information upon the life histories of the birds.— W. S.

**Swarth, on A Collection of Birds from Vancouver Island.**<sup>1</sup>—

An expedition was organized and financed by Miss Annie M. Alexander in 1910 in the interests of the University of California for the purpose of collecting the higher vertebrates of Vancouver Island. Miss Alexander, Miss Louise Kellogg, Mr. Harry S. Swarth and Mr. E. Despard made up the party and Mr. Swarth here presents us with a detailed account of the localities visited and a discussion of the distribution and relationship of the birds and mammals, the former comprising 111 species.

Several Pine Grosbeaks were observed on July 15 and a male in juvenal plumage was secured showing pretty conclusively that a form of this bird which Mr. Swarth refers provisionally to *Pinicola enucleator flammula* breeds on the island.

The extensive material obtained made possible a careful study of the affinities of the Vancouver representatives of several species which has led to interesting results. The Savannah Sparrow is found to be 'widely different' from *Passerculus s. alaudinus* and 'practically indistinguishable' from *P. s. savanna* of eastern North America. The Nighthawk too, is the eastern form *Chordeiles v. virginianus* and the Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra minor*, while the Junco is *J. h. oregonus*. In a large series of Song Sparrows from Vancouver and southern Alaska Mr. Swarth fails to "perceive the differences supposedly distinguishing *morphna* from *rufina*," while the Northwest Crow is treated as a subspecies of *C. brachyrhynchus*.

Certain forms not recognized in the A. O. U. Check-List are held to be valid as *Hirundo erythrogastra palmeri*, *Dendroica aestiva hooveri*, *Ceryle alcyon caurina*, and *Geothlypis trichas scirpicola* while certain differences are noted in the vernacular names. A strong plea too is made for the restriction of the name *ruber* to the northern instead of the southern form of Red-breasted Sapsucker, which deserves careful consideration. Indeed

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<sup>1</sup> Report on a Collection of Birds and Mammals from Vancouver Island. By Harry S. Swarth. University of California Publications in Zoology, Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 1-124, pll. 1-4. February 13, 1912.

Mr. Swarth's paper is well worthy of detailed study and is a noteworthy contribution to west coast ornithology.— W. S.

**Mathews' The Austral Avian Record.**<sup>1</sup>—This journal is issued at irregular intervals in connection with the Austral Avian Museum, Watford, Herts, England, by Mr. Gregory M. Mathews. It is intended to comprise such notes as require immediate attention in connection with the author's 'Birds of Australia' now in course of publication. Descriptions of new forms, notes on nomenclature and any other interesting matter relating to the Australian avifauna will be included. The present number comprises notes on Australian Cuckoos in which the nomenclature of all the forms is discussed, *Owenavis* and *Neochalcites* appear as new genera and ten new species and subspecies are proposed. A second note is a useful table of the dates of issue of the parts of Lear's 'Psittacidae' and Müller's 'Verhandeligen over de Natuurlijke Geshiedenis. Land-en Volkenkunde.' We do not think that Mr. Mathews' proposal to ignore Lesson's group or "race" names which have always been given recognition as genera will meet with the approval of ornithologists, nor do we consider that the authors of the International Code ever intended that article 2 should be interpreted as rejecting group names not explicitly designated by their proposers as genera or subgenera.— W. S.

**Parkins' Record of Sales of the Great Auk and its Eggs.**<sup>2</sup>— This is an interesting pamphlet containing a record of sales of specimens of the Great Auk or its eggs at public auction in Great Britain from 1806 to 1910. The early history of the specimens is included so far as it is known, and the character of this information will be seen by consulting Col. Thayer's article on p. 208 of this number of 'The Auk.' There are several interesting illustrations.— W. S.

**Jacobs' The American Bird House Journal for 1912.**<sup>3</sup>— Under this title Mr. J. Warren Jacobs proposes to issue an annual publication in continuation of his well known series of papers dealing with the history of

<sup>1</sup> The Austral Avian Record. A Scientific Journal devoted primarily to the Study of the Australian Avifauna. Vol. I, No. 1. Issued in connection with the Austral Avian Museum, Watford, Herts, England. Editor, Gregory M. Mathews. Price 1/6 Net. Witherby & Co., 326 High Holborn, London, W. C. January 2nd, 1912.

<sup>2</sup> The Great Auk. A Record of Sales of Birds and Eggs by Public Auction in Great Britain, 1806-1910. With Historical and Descriptive Notes and five Plates. (Extra Paper to Part 6, of Vol. I., Hastings and East Sussex Naturalist.) By Thomas Parkin, M. A., F. L. S., F. Z. S., (Member of the British Ornithologists' Union). Hastings, Burfield & Pennells Ltd. MCMXI. (Price two shillings.)

<sup>3</sup> The American Bird House Journal for 1912, published by the Jacobs Bird House Co. Waynesburg Pa., pp. 95-141. Price, 25 cents.