

several times during the night, but its actual awakening followed that of the Hermit Thrush, which began singing at 4.02. The times noted were 4.08, 4.13, and 4.15, when frequent singing began.

I hope that more notes on the morning awakening may be made in many localities. Only thus can we get the data for accurate generalizations. And due allowance for the night-singing habit must be made in all such observations.—FRANCIS H. ALLEN, *West Roxbury, Mass.*

RECENT LITERATURE.

Cooke's 'Distribution and Migration of North American Rails.'¹

— In this important report Prof. Cooke presents a concise account of the geographic distribution and migration of the rails following the same plan adopted in his previous reports on the shore-birds, herons, etc. The bibliography of North American ornithology is becoming so enormous that it is practically impossible for the individual to compile with any degree of completeness such data as are here presented. The formation of such a card index as has been prepared by Prof. Cooke, from which reports like the present may be readily compiled, constitutes one of the most important pieces of work, from the standpoint of the ornithologist, that the U. S. Biological Survey has undertaken.

Maps showing graphically the summer and winter distribution of each species add greatly to the value of the report. The summary shows that 44 forms of rails and their allies occur north of Panama. Of these 21 are restricted to the West Indies and Middle America and two are stragglers from Europe leaving 21 forms occurring regularly in the United States.

The wanton slaughter of Soras and Clapper Rails by so called sportsmen has sadly reduced the number of these birds and the killing of 3000 of the former species on a 500 acre marsh on the James River, Va., in a single day, or of 10,000 Clapper Rails at Atlantic City, N. J., in a day, are incidents only too well known to those who were familiar with the practices of a few years ago.—W. S.

Wetmore on the Growth of the Tail Feathers of the Giant Hornbill.²— In this bird, as is well known, the middle pair of rectrices greatly exceed the others in length. The fact that the examination of a considerable series failed to show any in which more than one of the pair was fully

¹ Distribution and Migration of North American Rails and their Allies. By Wells W. Cooke. Bull. U. S. Dept. Agriculture, No. 128. Sept. 25, 1914.

² A Peculiarity in the Growth of the Tail Feathers of the Giant Hornbill (*Rhinopalax vigil*). Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., Vol. 47, pp. 497-500. October 24, 1914.