

ducks, geese and swans. The author's conclusions are the same as those he reached on a previous occasion, being those held by "the most eminent ornithologists and avian taxonomers of the Old World" — that *Dendrocygna* belongs with the ducks and not with the swans or geese with which the A. O. U. Check-List associates the genus. Dr. Shufeldt's criticism of the classification of the latter work shows that he has not read the preface where the reasons for maintaining the original sequence of groups are given. A "Check-List" need not be a "Phylogenetic System" and the A. O. U. Committee clearly states that the sequence followed does not represent present day classification. No less than 14 double page half-tone plates of the osteology of *Dendrocygna* and allied genera are used in illustration of Dr. Shufeldt's paper as well as two crude colored plates of tree ducks.— W. S.

**Shufeldt on Fossil Birds in the Marsh Collection.**<sup>1</sup>— In this paper Dr. Shufeldt presents the results of his studies of the avian fossils in the Marsh collection in the Yale University Museum and certain of Marsh's types of fossil birds in the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia. Prof. Marsh left much material unidentified and from this Dr. Shufeldt has described a number of new forms. viz: *Telmatornis rex* (p. 27), New Jersey Cretaceous; *Botauroides* (gen. nov.) *parvus* (p. 33), *Eoecornis* (gen. nov.) *ardetta* (p. 39), *Falco falconella* (p. 40), and *Grus marshi* (p. 41), all from the Eocene of Wyoming; *Colymbus oligoceanus* (p. 54), *Larus pristinus* (p. 54), *Limicolavis pluvianella* (p. 55), and *Phalacrocorax marinavis* (p. 56) from the Oligocene (?) of Oregon; *P. mediterraneus* (p. 58) and *Phasianus americanus* (p. 58) from the Oligocene of Colorado and Oregon respectively; *P. mioceanus* (p. 60), Nebraska Miocene, *Sula atlantica* (p. 62), New Jersey Miocene, *Tympanuchus lulli* (p. 69), Post-pliocene of New Jersey; *Colinus eatoni* (p. 70), Kansas, *Gavia pusilla* (p. 70), Wyoming (?), *Phasianus alphilda* (p. 71), Wyoming, the last three with no horizon recorded. A new genus *Minerva* (p. 43) is proposed for *Aquila antiqua*.

Dr. Shufeldt has added materially to the list of North American fossil birds, but there are two nomenclatural points in his valuable paper that call for comment. One is the naming "provisionally" a species *Colymbus oligoceanus*. After the numerous discussions of rules of nomenclature that have been going on of late years we thought that one point was pretty generally understood, i. e. that it was impossible to name a species *provisionally*. A name once published stands or falls on the original diagnosis no matter how poor or incomplete it may be. Another species is called by Dr. Shufeldt *Phasianus americanus*, but this name has been previously used by Audubon (Orn. Biog. V, p. 335, 1839). The name was proposed for a bird seen and described by J. K. Townsend; what it was it is diffi-

<sup>1</sup> Fossil Birds in the Marsh Collection of Yale University. By R. W. Shufeldt. Trans. Conn. Acad. Arts and Sciences, Vol. 19, pp. 1-110. February, 1915.

cult to say, but the name seems to have a status in nomenclature and hence renders Dr. Shufeldt's name invalid. We would propose as a substitute **Phasianus roberti** nom. nov. after Dr. Robert W. Shufeldt.—W. S.

**White on an Expedition to the Interior of Australia.**<sup>1</sup>— This paper treats of the scientific results of a trip, on camel back, of 1300 miles undertaken by Capt. and Mrs. White primarily for the purpose of adding to the knowledge of the avifauna of interior Australia. Their route lay north from Oodnadatta, the railroad terminus 700 miles north of Adelaide, and extended to the headwaters of the Finke and Todd Rivers. "A dry and awful country which, when the rain comes, blossoms like the rose, but in a short space of time (about eight weeks) once more subsides into its normal state of drought." Capt. White adds "The dreary aspect and the solitude of this vast country followed us like a nightmare as we travelled south." Collections in various departments were made and are treated by specialists, the narrative and the account of the birds being by Capt. White. One hundred and eighteen species and subspecies are listed, six of which have been described as new by Mr. Gregory M. Mathews in the 'Austral Avian Record.' The stomach contents of sixteen species are described by Mr. Arthur M. Lea.—W. S.

**Cassinia, 1914**<sup>2</sup>. The editor of the Delaware Valley Club's publication, Mr. Robert Thomas Moore, has brought out another exceedingly interesting number, though its appearance is somewhat delayed. While the policy of restricting the scope of 'Cassinia' to the states bordering on the Delaware is wisely continued, the character of the articles demonstrates the unlimited possibilities of intensive study in a limited area.

Dr. Spencer Trotter contributes to the series of biographical papers a discussion of 'Old Philadelphia Bird Collectors and Taxidermists' in which a disappearing type is considered from personal acquaintance with such examples as Chris. Wood, John Krider, etc. John D. Carter shows the possibilities of close observation on Delaware River birds even though only a short time each day may be available for the purpose. George Spencer Morris gives a delightful account of the Tacony Valley where his home is located and about which are centered all his early ornithological associations.

Henry Oldys has a paper on 'Individual Variety of Bird Songs' suggested by a paper by Mr. Moore in last year's issue of 'Cassinia' and Dr. Cornelius Weygandt writes of 'Summer in the Poconos' in his attractive style.

<sup>1</sup> Scientific Notes on an Expedition into the Interior of Australia carried out by Capt. S. A. White, M. B. O. U., from July to October, 1913. Trans. Royal Soc., So. Australia, XXXVIII, pp. 407-474, pl. XXI-XXXIX, 1914.

<sup>2</sup> Cassinia: A Bird Annual. Proceedings of the Delaware Valley Ornithological Club. 1914. pp. 1-80, pl. I-V. March [= April, 1915.] Delaware Valley Ornith. Club, care Acad. Nat. Sciences, Philadelphia. Price 50 cts.