

given an opportunity to pass on the colors of the reproductions and whoever approved them was woefully incompetent.

Nevertheless the plates make a most attractive series of illustrations and Mr. Sutton is to be congratulated upon a beautiful set of paintings.

The letter press is well printed on heavy paper and the binding is very attractive, making all in all a very handsome and presentable book of which the author may well feel proud.

While we have considered the book as a popular illustrated work on Florida birds, which we infer is the position in literature that its author intended it to take, we feel that a word must be said as to its standing as a state list. In this respect it is open to criticism, from the fact that some twenty of the birds included have never been definitely recorded from Florida, while a like number apparently listed as breeders have never been so recorded, and in none of these cases does the author offer confirmatory data. All three Phalaropes are mentioned as of regular occurrence along the coast, and the time of their spring and fall migration is definitely stated, and yet we have searched in vain for any published record of the occurrence of any of them in Florida. Then there is the case of the White-winged Crossbill, which is figured and described as a Florida bird, and yet when we look up the reference, which in this case is given, we find that it refers to the Red Crossbill instead!

In reading the statements about the nesting and the number and size of eggs of such species as the Baltimore Oriole, Black-billed Cuckoo, etc., one would naturally infer that they bred in Florida, but as there is no evidence of the fact, we assume that Mr. Bailey was drawing upon his experience with them in the North.

It is unfortunate, too, that scientific names have been used in a work of this kind, especially since many of those employed by the author are not to be found in the A. O. U. 'Check List' nor in any other standard work on North American birds, and can therefore be of no possible use to the reader. Furthermore, a number of them have been misspelled, a fault that now and then extends to the English names as well, since we find the Kittiwake consistently called "Kitterwake," and the malar region referred to as "molar" region.

These errors, however, will not affect the use of the work by those for whom it is especially adapted, and the attractive and accurate plates will interest many persons in Florida birds and their protection, while the book at once places the state in the ranks of those which have their avifauna adequately illustrated. The scientific reference list of the birds of Florida with full and definite data, however, is still to be written.—W. S.

Forbush's 'Birds of Massachusetts'—Considering the fact that Massachusetts has led the country in the number of its ornithologists and bird students and was the birth place of the Nuttall Ornithological Club, the parent of the American Ornithologists' Union, it is rather surprising that it has never had an adequate state "bird book."

There is the admirable "list" of Howe and Allen, the delightful works of Brewster and Townsend on the restricted areas of Cambridge and Essex County respectively, and the economic volumes of Forbush, but no comprehensive illustrated work on the birds of the state.

This, however, is at last furnished in the work before us,¹ the author of which, finding himself, like Minot before him, unable to satisfactorily treat the birds of Massachusetts without considering the rest of New England, amplifies his title to the 'Birds of Massachusetts and Other New England States.' The present volume, comprising nearly five hundred pages of text, constitutes "part I" and covers the water, marsh and shore birds, leaving the land birds for Parts II and III, which are to follow.

The plan of Mr. Forbush's text has been very carefully considered and the details worked out with great care. The nomenclature is that of the A. O. U. 'Check-List' with additional common names appended. Then comes, in small type, a detailed description covering all the plumages which the species exhibits, based upon personal studies of specimens in the larger museums of the country. Following this are paragraphs on measurements, molts, field marks, voice, breeding—including number and size of eggs, dates of laying, and period of incubation, range, distribution in New England, and "season" in Massachusetts.

The main text, in larger type, is arranged in two sections, one covering the haunts and habits of the species and the other its economic status. The information here presented is based on the author's many years' study of the birds of New England coupled with a thorough knowledge of the literature of the subject, not only as it relates to New England but with regard to all of North America. There are many statements based on the verbal reports of sportsmen and other correspondents and appropriate quotations from various publications, with footnote references not only to the sources of information but to pertinent books and papers where additional information may be obtained.

The author now and then presents most interesting sketches of habits and life histories from his own observations or quotes such matter from the works of Townsend, Chapman, Bent, Pearson, etc., so that the book has a pleasing literary flavor in addition to its reliable statistical and historical foundation.

It can readily be inferred that the 'Birds of Massachusetts' is not only virtually the 'Birds of New England' but also in great measure a work on birds of North America in general, to which we shall turn for all sorts of information and references not found in the ordinary local bird

¹ Massachusetts Department of Agriculture | Dr. Arthur W. Gilbert | Commissioner | Birds of | Massachusetts | and Other New England States | By | Edward Howe Forbush | Part I. Water Birds, Marsh Birds and | Shore Birds | Illustrated with Colored Plates from Drawings by | Louis Agassiz Fuertes | and | Figures and Cuts from Drawings and Photographs by | the Author and Others | Issued by Authority of the Legislature | 1925 | Size 9¼ × 7¼ ins. | pp. 1-xxxii + 1-481, pls. 1-33, figs. 1-35 and sixty-eight cuts. Price \$5.00.

book. Opening at random, at the Black Tern, for example, we find detailed descriptions of five plumages and learn that there are no differences between the plumages of the sexes, the colors of the bill and feet at various seasons as seen in fresh specimens and the color of the down in nestlings are given on the authority of Fuertes, Bent and Ridgway, while the call notes are given in syllabic notation as they sounded to Chapman, Bent and Henninger, the general distribution of the species is presented in great detail with a concise statement for each of the New England states.

Birds of only casual occurrence in Massachusetts are treated in the same detail as others with data on habits, etc., drawn from their occurrence elsewhere, and occasional "notes" entered in their proper systematic place treat of species of questionable occurrence in New England. There are moreover family headings under which are given the important structural characters of the group and sometimes a summary of the economic status of its component species where these do not differ individually in their food habits.

From this resumé of the text of Mr. Forbush's excellent work we turn to a consideration of the illustrations. The color plates, thirty-three in number, are by Louis Agassiz Fuertes and did they constitute the only merit of the work it would easily hold a leading place in the ranks of state bird books. They are in our estimation the best bird plates that this author has yet given us and have been admirably reproduced. His composition shows marked improvement with longer experience, so that to a great extent he has managed to minimize the detracting effect of the overcrowding, which is forced on all bird artists in works that require the portraiture of every species in the state or other region covered. Reduction in the size of the figures also lends aid to this effort while it in no way lessens their value for purposes of identification.

The pleasing effect of making each of the plates a complete picture with appropriate background also enhances their beauty and gives opportunity for presenting characteristic poses in various small figures sketched into the distance. Thorburn's method of dispensing with margins or captions to the plates and carrying the picture clear to the edge of the paper has been followed and adds greatly to their beauty as does the use of tinted backgrounds throughout, thus avoiding the glaring contrast of white paper and brilliant plumage. The advance in the effectiveness of Mr. Fuertes' work can be appreciated by comparing these plates with those in Eaton's 'Birds of New York' which are equally accurate for purposes of identification, but for reasons above mentioned not nearly so artistic or effective. His method of portraying the land birds will be awaited with interest. Mr. Forbush also presents a number of half-tone plates of nests and mounted specimens of the accidental visitors, which were not covered by the colored plates, and many little pen sketches in the text, mostly by the author, representing structural characters, young birds, etc.

As stated elsewhere in these reviews there are many sorts of state bird

books, some basing their claims to recognition on one feature some on another. Mr. Furbush's work has the exceptionable merit of scoring success on two counts—accuracy and breadth of text, and accuracy and beauty of illustration. Furthermore it has fortunately had the financial backing of the state and is "issued by authority of the legislature" so that it is relieved of the burdens and limitations which often beset a privately printed work. The paper is excellent and the printing beautifully done, features not usually present in a "state" publication, while the avoidance of coated paper for the text and the moderate size of the pages make a volume that is easily handled.

Volume I, as completed, is certainly a production of which the author, the artist, the printers and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts may well be proud.—W. S.

Phillips' 'Natural History of the Ducks.'—Like certain other good things, Dr. Phillips' great work on the Ducks¹ seems to improve with age, or rather, each volume seems to be an improvement on its predecessor. One can hardly say that the text improves because it reached such a standard of perfection in the first part that improvement was well nigh impossible, but that standard has been well maintained throughout, and one marvels at the extent of the author's researches through the literature of the world, which have brought together such a mass of information, all thoroughly sifted and systematically arranged. It is perhaps the plates which give the impression of constant improvement. In the volume now before us there are twenty-six, all but five colored and these latter with one exception represent black and white species. Four are by Fuertes, one by Benson and twenty-one by Brooks. The figures are not too crowded and the grouping good, so that the work of the artists is seen at its best. The charts showing the range of the species are on the same plan as in the earlier volumes and the whole arrangement of the text follows the same scheme as heretofore.

This volume completes the Anatinae and covers most of the Fuligulinae. The account of the Wood Duck, which the author for some reason prefers to call the Carolina Duck, is particularly interesting. Besides a very fully compiled sketch of the bird in a wild state, from his own experiences and those of others, the author gives accounts of its breeding habits based on observations of the free-flying birds in the Berlin Zoological Gardens, and also describes his own experience in rearing these Ducks in captivity and raising the young under hens and Mallards. He describes Heinroth's observations in the Berlin Zoo of the young birds climbing to

¹ A Natural History of | the Ducks | By John C. Phillips | Associate Curator of Birds in the Museum | of Comparative Zoology at Harvard College | with Plates in Color and in Black and White | from Drawings by | Frank W. Benson, Allan Brooks and Louis Agassiz Fuertes | Volume III | Anatinae (concluded) and Fuligulinae (in part) | [vignette] | Boston and New York | Houghton Mifflin Company | The Riverside Press, Cambridge | 1925 pp. 1-xii + 1-383; pll. 45-70 maps 66-95. [Size 12¼ × 9½ ins.] Price \$50.00 per volume.