

Pheasant, Swiftlets, Nutmeg Pigeons, etc. All who love nature-lore will find this volume a most interesting and readable book, the unfamiliar birds, trees and plants of the Antipodes, of which we in America know all too little, adding a zest to the perusal. We owe a debt of gratitude to Mr. Chisholm for preserving these last papers of Banfield for posterity.—W. S.

Walter's 'Wild Birds in City Parks.'—This well known little book,¹ which has been helping beginners in bird study for over twenty-five years—comes out in another new and revised edition. The amount of information contained in the 100 odd pages of this brochure is astonishing and proves it to be a veritable *multum in parvo*. Besides the general list and the key there is a table of distribution and occurrence which helps in identification, and a table of arrivals for a period of seven years and one of frequency, both based upon observations in Lincoln Park, Chicago, which are important contributions to ornithology.

As we glance through the pages two suggestions occur to us. One is that when such closely related birds as the four small Flycatchers and Grinnell's Water-Thrush are given a place in the main list, the Carolina Chickadee might be accorded the same honor. Possibly it is the very suppression of this species in a book so widely used that has resulted in so many erroneous identifications of this species as the Black-cap in our more or less popular journals. Our other suggestion would be to include in the index, the names of birds in the supplementary list. We were under the impression that some important birds had been entirely omitted until we discovered that they simply had not been indexed.

We congratulate the authors upon the continued success of their little volume which will soon begin to instruct its second lineal generation of bird students!—W. S.

Todd on Neotropical Goldfinches.—Like all of Mr. Todd's monographs his review of the Neotropical Goldfinches² is a painstaking and thorough piece of work. Based on all the material that could be assembled—upwards of 1000 skins—and backed by a thorough study of the literature he has given us by far the most satisfactory account of this difficult group that has so far appeared.

As anyone who has had to do with these birds realizes, the range of individual, seasonal and age variation is so great that it often obscures the geographical variation upon which our systematic studies must be

¹ Wild Birds in City Parks. Being hints on identifying 203 birds, prepared primarily for the spring migration in Lincoln Park, Chicago, but adapted to other localities in northeastern United States and Canada. By Herbert Eugene Walter and Alice Hall Walter. Twelfth Edition, Revised. New York. The Macmillan Company, 1926. Price \$1.50.

² A Study of the Neotropical Finches of the Genus *Spinus*. By W. E. Clyde Todd. Annals of the Carnegie Museum, Vol. XVII, No. 1, 1926. Issued June 9, 1926. pp. 11-82.

based. Mr. Todd records seventeen species and nine additional subspecies of which *S. sanctaecrucis* (p. 47) from Samarpata, Bolivia; *S. peruvianus paulus* (p. 51) from the Andes of southern Ecuador and northern Peru; *S. magellanicus tucumanus* (p. 65) from Santiago del Estero Argentina and *S. m. urubambinus* (p. 65) from Urubamba Valley, Peru, are described as new, while females have been examined which undoubtedly represent two additional forms though in the absence of male specimens Mr. Todd wisely refrains from naming them. Besides the systematic consideration of the group Mr. Todd's study has led him into the broader problems of geographic distribution. He calls especial attention to the discontinuous distribution of several of the species of South American Goldfinches which he considers indicates antiquity of origin and dispersal, and the occurrence of several species in the same area indicating that they have no immediate relationship but were differentiated before their ranges overlapped.

Spinus is thus on many counts a plastic genus adapting itself easily to changing environment and probably for that reason is the only Palae-arctic Finch genus to reach South America. The forms with the least black on the head our author regards as the most primitive, *S. xanthoptera* he considers a derivative of *Astragalinus psaltria* a species obviously of North American origin and upon this as well as other grounds he proposes to merge *Astragalinus* and *Spinus*, a conclusion reached independently by the A. O. U. Sub-committee on classification for the new Check-List.

Mr. Todd finds it very difficult to account for the presence of the various species of *Spinus* in South America on the basis of Asiatic derivation via the Behring Strait land bridge, and is inclined to favor a land bridge from the West Indies to the Mediterranean countries of Europe as proposed by Scharff, over which this genus, he thinks, must have come in several invasions.

Mr. Todd has prepared a notable systematic paper and his broader philosophical deductions are worthy of serious consideration, for there are other similar instances among South American birds which strongly support his contentions.—W. S.

The Australian Check-List.¹—In 'The Auk' for April, 1913, the present reviewer published a notice of the official 'Checklist' of the birds of Australia prepared by a committee of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists' Union and he has now before him the second edition of the same work. Of the seven members of the original committee but four are included among the fourteen who had to do with the preparation of the present list and two of these took part only in the earlier activities.

Our criticism of the first edition was mainly against the adoption of

¹ The Official Checklist of the Birds of Australia, Compiled by a Committee of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists' Union. Second and Revised Edition. With Appendix, Scientific Names—Notes and Pronunciation. By H. Wolstenholme, B.A., M. B. O. U., R. A. O. U. Wahroonga, Sydney. Published by the Royal Australasian Ornithologists' Union. 1926. pp. i-x, + 1-212 with 1 map Price 12 shillings 6 pence. [376 Flinders St., Melbourne.]