

Skinner's Guide to the Winter Birds of the North Carolina Sandhills.—Heretofore we seem to have concentrated most of our attention on the summer birds of the regions of which we write, doubtless because they constitute the breeding species and it is upon breeding areas that all zoogeographical work must be based. Then too the nesting season covers the most interesting cycles of the bird's life history.

Now however we are beginning to learn from bird banding that certain if not all birds have as definite a winter home as a summer range and it is quite fitting that works on the winter birds of definite areas should appear. Among the hosts of northern people who now go south for the winter, there must be many bird lovers, and books on the winter bird life of the regions that they visit will be most welcome.

The first work to fill such a need is the attractive volume by Milton P. Skinner on the 'Winter Birds of the North Carolina Sandhills.'¹ The author's plan is admirable. Under each species we have field identification marks, a concise description, and a paragraph on general distribution followed by a sketch of the habits of the species based mainly upon personal observation and full of interesting details.

The illustrations consist of characteristic photographs of scenes in the North Carolina sandhills and twelve colored plates from paintings by E. J. Sawyer, in his happy style of grouping a number of species together according to habitat. Mr. Sawyer's ability to get into his minute figures all of the characteristics of the species is well known and these plates are fully up to his high standard. A most useful plate, of a different type, consists of the heads of the Sparrows in winter plumage and there is also a color chart.

The book is dedicated to the late Dr. John Warren Achorn by a memorial committee of his friends. Dr. Achorn, a retired Boston physician, spent many winters in the sandhills and had long contemplated such a work as has now been produced and his friends securing the services of Mr. Skinner have most successfully carried out his idea.

Two chapters by Dr. Achorn himself have been added to the main text, one being a general sketch of the bird life of the sandhills and the other explaining the game of "bird golf" which Dr. Achorn devised, based upon competitive daily lists.

The little volume is an important addition to ornithological literature and a credit to all connected with its preparation.—W. S.

Napier's 'On the Barrier Reef.'—This popular account² of the great

¹ A Guide to the Winter Birds of the North Carolina Sandhills. By Milton P. Skinner with chapters by Dr. John Warren Achorn. Illustrated in color by Edmund J. Sawyer. Albany, N. Y. 1928. [Selling Agency: The Science Press Distributing Company, Grand Central Terminal, New York, N. Y.] pp. i-xiv+1-301, pll. 1-13, full page figs. 1-30. Price \$4.00.

² On the Barrier Reef. Notes from a No-ologist's Pocket-Book. S. Elliott Napier. Australia; Angus & Robertson Limited. 89 Castlereagh Street Sydney. 1928. pp. 1-173.