

Soper's 'A Faunal Investigation of Southern Baffin Island.'—This valuable report¹ is based upon two years' exploration by the author in the interests of the National Museum of Canada from 1924 to 1926. There is an interesting diary covering the itinerary, followed by detailed reports on the mammals and birds. Short reports on the fishes, insects, fungi, pteropoda and fossils, by various authors, complete the volume. Eighty-five species of birds are listed of which sixty-three are water birds. Besides species collected by the author all others recorded from the island are included and there are extracts from the diary of Bernard Hantzsch and from published accounts of Baffin Island birds. The Eskimo names of the birds are given wherever determined.

It is interesting to note the presence of such western species as the Pacific Loon, Steller's Eider and Cassin's Bullfinch (?) occurring with the Greenland Eider, Greenland Redpoll and the Ringed Plover. Dr. R. M. Anderson, in a foot note, records the taking of a nest and eggs of the Greater Snow Goose at Dundas, Devon Island, on June 22, 1923 which is apparently the only breeding record since that of the late Langdon Gibson in north Greenland.

The report is a valuable contribution to the ornithology of a region concerning which our information is very meagre.—W. S.

Reports on Collections of the Whitney South Sea Expedition.—

Three papers² based on the extremely rich collections of the Whitney Expedition have recently been published by the American Museum. In the first Dr. Murphy and Mr. Mathews report on the collection of Zosteropidae in which four new subspecies of *Z. flavifrons* are described from the New Hebrides Group, together with *Z. lateralis valuensis* (p. 10) Valua Island; *Z. samoensis* (p. 11) Savaii Island, Samoa Group; and a remarkable form allied to *Woodfordia* which is named *Sanfordia* (gen. nov.) *lacertosa* (p. 13) Santa Cruz Island, Santa Cruz Group.

Another paper is by Dr. Ernst Hartert and consists of notes on the Solomon Islands collection and on specimens from the same group in the Tring Museum. The following are named as new; *Spiloglax roseoaxillaris* (p. 6) Bauro (San Cristobal); *S. jacquinoti eichorni* (p. 7) Choiseul Island; *Guadalcanaria* (gen. nov.) *inexpectata* (p. 8) Guadalcanar, a remarkable Fruit Pigeon allied to *Ptilotis lewini*; *Dicaeum aeneum becki* (p. 9) Guadalcanar; *Zosterops alberti oblita* (p. 10) Guadalcanar; *Z. murphyi* (p. 11) Kulambangra; *Z. splendida* (p. 12) Ganonga, *Mochthopoeus* (gen. nov.) *amoenus* (p. 13) Kulambangra, allied to *Phylloscopus*; *Phylloscopus trivirgatus becki* (p. 13) Guadalcanar; *Pachycephala implicata* (p. 13)

¹ A Faunal Investigation of Southern Baffin Island. By J. Dewey Soper. Bulletin 53, National Museum of Canada. Ottawa, 1928. pp. 1-143. Price 25 cents.

² Birds Collected During the Whitney South Sea Expedition. VII. By Robert Cushman Murphy and Gregory M. Mathews. Amer. Mus. Novit., No. 356. July 2, 1929. pp. 1-14. VIII. By Ernst Hartert, Amer. Mus. Novit. 364, July 29, 1929, pp. 1-19. IX. By R. C. Murphy, Amer. Mus. Novit. 365, July 30, 1929.

Whitney Island; *P. pectoralis whitneyi* (p. 14) for which no locality is given while the paragraphs relating to it are apparently placed by mistake under the preceding species; and *Mino dumontii sanfordi* (p. 18).

The third paper is by Dr. Murphy and consists of additional comments on Solomon Islands' Zosteropidae based on collections received subsequent to those studied by Dr. Hartert. *Z. alberti hamlini* (p. 3) Bougainville; *Z. metcalfi exigua* (p. 5) Shortland Isl.; *Z. rendovae tetiparia* (p. 7) Tetipari Isl.; and *Z. rennelliana* (p. 10) Rennell Isl. are described as new, while additional information on *Woodfordia superciliosa*, of which eight specimens were secured, is furnished.—W. S.

Nicholson's Census of British Heronries.—This interesting report,¹ the result of the efforts of 'British Birds,' Mr. H. F. Witherby and Mr. E. M. Nicholson and a corps of local observers, shows what can be done in the way of concerted effort, and also offers some interesting comparisons with Heron conditions in the United States.

Outside of the purely ornithological interest the census was undertaken as a contribution to our knowledge of the number of animals in relation to space and time.

From the tabulations presented we learn that there were in England and Wales, in 1928, 254 occupied heronries containing at least 3,744 nests which gives as a probable Heron (*Ardea cinerea*) population 20,000 birds, or one to three square miles, the human population for the same area being 2000 times more dense.

Some of the heronries, while they may have slightly changed their actual location, have been in existence for hundreds of years, that of Althorp Park, Northamptonshire, having a published record as early as 1634. Throughout the greater part of England heronries are rigidly protected by land owners and tenants and some leases have provisions for Heron protection, a custom dating back to the times of falconry, when Herons were used as game for the Falcons. The protection now so generally offered to the birds is a matter of personal concern and not due to law. In some counties where fishing interests predominate Herons are shot as apparently detrimental to this pursuit, but this charge seems not definitely proven. In past years they were esteemed as an article of food, especially the nestlings and young of the year, which as late as the thirties of the last century were eaten in Somerset, "skinned, stuffed and roasted like hare, with strawberries and cream to follow" and up to 1896, in Romney Marsh, they were shot for food.

The destruction of heronries was found to be mainly due to the felling of the trees in which the birds nested, some thirty having been thus destroyed or driven elsewhere during the World War, when timber was needed. Egg collecting has destroyed some heronries, and photographing

¹ Report on the "British Birds" Census of Heronries, 1928. By E. M. Nicholson. Reprinted from "British Birds" XXII, Nos. 11 and 12. Price 3s. 6d. (H. F. and G. Witherby, 326 High Holborn, London.)