

We could go on quoting words of wisdom from this work but those who study birds in the field should read the book in its entirety. There are chapters on recording bird censuses, of making ecological studies, investigations of song, nesting, etc., etc.

The fact that it is an English book and mentions English species, where definite mention of species is required, in no way detracts from its usefulness to American bird watchers as the methods to be pursued and the objects to be gained are the same everywhere. It is largely to bird watching that ornithology looks for its advancement today, accumulation of skins and their study, so far as many parts of the world are concerned, is, like nomenclature "a means not an end of ornithological science" and is, except in the case of museums, almost a thing of the past. It is therefore high time that we develop well trained bird watchers, field students, or whatever we may call them, who shall know what to look for and how to record their observations, so that a valuable method of scientific research shall not develop into a mere amusement. Mr. Nicholson's book is almost the first to adequately point the way and lay down the rules of the game.—W. S.

Kearton's 'The Island of Penguins.'—We have had a number of books and papers dealing with penguins notably Dr. Levick's 'Antarctic Penguins' and Dr. Murphy's paper on the 'Penguins of South Georgia Island,' both dealing with more typically Antarctic species, and now we have before us Mr. Kearton's contribution¹ to the life history of the Black-footed or Jackass Penguin (*Spheniscus demersus*), which breeds on an island off Cape of Good Hope. The author and his wife spent five months on the 'Island of Penguins,' inhabited only by the birds and the lighthouse keepers. They estimated that at least five million penguins as well as hosts of gulls, cormorants, terns, etc., bred there so that it was by no means "uninhabited." Mr. Kearton is well known as a photographer of birds and the seventy odd pictures in the present volume fully maintain his reputation, while his graphic account of his experiences testify to his ability as a writer as well.

Except in the first chapter, in which he describes the trip from Capetown and arrival at the island, he devotes himself entirely to the birds, explaining the absence of personal experiences by the statements that the knowledge he obtained of the birds is more important than how he acquired it; that after writing the life history of some five million penguins there would be no room for anything more; and finally that the penguins are far more amusing than he can ever hope to be!

His account of the birds is written in a personal vein referring to the pair which he especially studied as Mr. and Mrs. Penguin and likening individuals to various types of human beings which they could not help but

¹ The Island of Penguins. By Cherry Kearton, Author of In the Land of the Lion; Photographing Wild Life across the World, etc. With seventy illustrations and a map. Robert M. McBride & Company, 7 W. 16th St., New York, MCMXXXI. Pp. 1-xviii + 1-248. Price, \$3.00.

recall vividly. This style makes the book unusually attractive to the general reader while the facts of behaviour are so accurately presented that it in no way detracts from its value as a scientific work.

The first night on the island was supposed to be devoted to much needed sleep: "but," says the author, "imagine yourself in the center of a field in which are tethered a hundred donkeys, then imagine these donkeys all braying at once—that was the discordant noise that drove us far from slumber." "But," he adds, "one can get used in time even to the sound of tram-cars passing one's bedroom window!" This loud braying of the birds accounts for their popular name of "Jackass" Penguin.

The thousand birds present when the author landed seemed a host in themselves but they sank into insignificance when the five million came up from the sea a few days later from their "winter quarters" farther south, their heads bobbing up and down as far as the eye could reach over the waves, and began to prepare for their nesting. The Black-footed Penguin digs a diagonal burrow one to three feet deep in the ground, or scoops out a shelter under an overhanging rock where some sticks, seaweed or grass stems are placed, upon which the eggs are laid. These are usually two in number, sometimes three or even four.

The courting performances, fights, bathing and molting are described in detail, for the birds were perfectly tame and went on with their business regardless of the presence of the visitors, sometimes actually walking into the tent.

There are chapters on the gulls and ibises which were ever on the alert to steal an egg and on the sharks which were dreaded enemies in the water, while seals and turtles which frequented the island receive due attention. Mr. Kearton has given us a most interesting account of the life of a fascinating bird and we are glad to learn that his book is deservedly popular. When the reader has finished its perusal he will, we think, agree with the author that the "Island of Penguins" is the "eighth wonder of the world."—W. S.

Crandall's 'Paradise Quest.'—We have already reviewed Mr. Crandall's preliminary accounts of his trip to New Guinea in the interests of the New York Zoological Society in quest of Birds of Paradise (see *Auk*, 1930, p. 109). This matter has now been amplified and issued in book form¹ and makes a most interesting narrative of life and travel in this still little known island. Most of the volume is devoted to detailed experiences with the natives and the wilderness and there is much information as to the method of life of the wild tribes, all abundantly illustrated.

One chapter is entitled "Birds of Paradise" and here are described several of the more noteworthy species secured, but as all specimens were obtained from the natives who catch them with snares, there is little or no

¹ *Paradise Quest, A Naturalist's Experiences in New Guinea.* By Lee S. Crandall, Curator of Birds, New York Zoological Park. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York and London. 1931. Pp. i-xvii + 1-226. Price \$3.50.