

technical and additional vernacular names below. The illustrations are attractive photographs of characteristic bits of scenery.

There is something particularly attractive about intensive studies of a limited area especially when, as in the present case, the matter has been carefully digested and written up in a scholarly manner. To local ornithologists and to those comparing the bird life of different parts of England such a work as this must be most welcome and even an American bird lover far removed from the local environment will find it delightful reading.

Our American states are usually too large and diversified for such treatment and the task of writing a comprehensive state bird book is both difficult and unsatisfactory, especially if, as it would appear, it is necessary to include colored plates of all the species, involving frequent duplication. We wonder if there be not a demand in this country for well compiled and written histories of the birds of smaller areas comparable to the British Counties, in which literary style rather than colored plates may be the chief objective.

We congratulate Dr. Ticehurst upon an excellent piece of work.—W. S.

Menegaux's 'Birds of France.'—As volume 26 of the 'Naturalist's Practical Encyclopedia'¹ Dr. Menegaux has published the first volume of a popular work on the birds of France, covering the birds of prey, gallinaeous birds, pigeons, woodpeckers and cuckoos.

The introductory pages deal with the anatomy of birds, bird-banding, collections and the preparation of specimens, as well as a list of bird parasites and a key for the determination of the species. The latter half of the little volume consists of descriptions of the various birds with brief accounts of their distribution and life history with vernacular names in several languages. There are many excellent line drawings, illustrating the introduction, and sixty-four colored plates of the species considered, which serve very well for purposes of identification.

The book, which is of pocket size, will be most welcome to local students and to visitors who desire a knowledge of the birds of continental Europe and who may desire to improve both their French and their ornithological knowledge. It is to be regretted that the entire work could not have been published in a single volume. Dr. Menegaux's name is a guarantee of the accuracy of the information conveyed.—W. S.

Anderson on Methods of Collecting and Preserving Specimens.—There have been various instructions published for the preparation of museum specimens but this bulletin by Dr. Anderson, published by the National Museum of Canada,² seems to be the best, including as it does a

¹ Encyclopedie Pratique du Naturaliste XXVI, Les Oiseaux de France par A. Menegaux. Vol. I. Introduction a l'Etude de L'Ornithologie Rapaces, Gallinaces Colombins, Piciformes. Paul Lechevalier & Fils, 12 Rue de Tournon, Paris. 1932. Pp. 1-93. Price 50 Francs.

² Methods of Collecting and Preserving Vertebrate Animals. By R. M. Anderson. Bulletin 69, Biological Series No. 13, National Museum of Canada. Ottawa, 1932. Pp. i-v + 1-141. Price 25 cents.

study of the methods employed by others as well as those of the author. Methods of collecting, trapping, skinning, and labelling are considered at length as well as the handling of greasy specimens and the making over of old material. Numerous illustrations explain the various processes.

We can heartily recommend Dr. Anderson's bulletin not only for the benefit to the individual collector but also for the resultant improvement in our museum collections. There is no excuse in these days for the carelessly made specimens which have hindered research in the past and made our museum collections unsightly. Dr. Anderson has rendered a service to all in compiling these instructions.—W. S.

Stead's 'Life Histories of New Zealand Birds.'—Some three years ago we had the pleasure of noticing Mr. W. P. B. Oliver's excellent work on 'New Zealand Birds,' a standard handbook on the avifauna of the islands. Now we have before us a companion work¹ dealing at greater length with the life histories of a limited number of the characteristic species. The author, Mr. Edgar F. Stead, has spent his life in the study of New Zealand's native birds, travelling widely over the country with note book and camera, and the present attractive volume sets forth some of the results of his labors.

He presents histories of three species of cormorants, five gulls and terns, a petrel, three shore birds, a hawk, owl, and kingfisher, and three "song birds": the Fantail, Blightbird and Bell-bird. These life-histories are extremely interesting and well written while the illustrations are admirable examples of the best work of the bird photographer, highly artistic and well reproduced. Anyone interested in bird life will find Mr. Stead's pages well worthy of his attention, and will gain an excellent idea of the coastal avifauna of this remote country. We trust that the author may be able to follow this work with an account of the life-histories of more of the land birds some of which, at least, are becoming very rare.

Mr. Stead tells us that "the destruction of the bush for timber or to make the land available for farming, removed the birds' shelter and their food supply and necessarily the birds went too." Even where isolated patches of bush are left they will be thronged with the introduced birds—blackbirds, thrushes and starlings which consume the native berries and when the crop of berries fails they can subsist on earth worms but this the native "bush birds" cannot do and they therefore perish.

Another serious detriment to bird life is the supply of cats which have run wild. "These marauding brutes" says our author, "protected by the Government because they take an occasional young rabbit, kill birds in great numbers." The rabbit is of course a great nuisance in New Zealand and is an example of the mistake of introducing exotic animals into any country, while the introduced British birds may, from the ornithologist's

¹ The | Life Histories of | New Zealand Birds | By | Edgar F. Stead | London | The Search Publishing Co., Ltd. | 6 Old Gloucester Street, W. C. 1 | 1932. Pp. i-xiv + 1-162. Pll. I-XCII. Price 30 shillings net.