

RECENT LITERATURE.

Boulton's 'Traveling with the Birds.'—This excellent publication¹ is in the form of a child's picture-book, with its quarto size, large type, and full page plates of birds usually of natural size. And if, as we venture to predict, it shall become very popular with our boys and girls it will serve a most useful purpose in stimulating a general interest in birds and their protection. But so well has the author presented his subject that it makes interesting reading for both old and young alike while the simplicity of his style makes his treatment of a difficult problem readily understandable to all. Using the works of Chapman, Wetmore, Rowan and others as his basis, he has presented the whole subject of migration in a thoroughly up to date manner but free from all technicalities while he has brought in various correlative phases of bird life in a very clever manner.

As we have recently stated in another connection, the ornithological artist has been handicapped in the recent state bird books by the necessity of crowding his figures on the plates but with the large size of the present volume, and with only the comparatively few species cited in the text to depict, Mr. Walter Weber, who has furnished the illustrations, has been entirely free from this limitation. He has presented us with twelve admirable paintings excellently reproduced illustrating twenty-four species, often only one or two to a plate. The male and female Scarlet Tanager on a branch of flowering dogwood which also appears on the cover appeals particularly to the reviewer as it was in just such a setting that he first made the acquaintance of this species over fifty years ago. The composition of all the plates is excellent and the backgrounds well selected. In addition Mr. Weber has depicted twenty-seven other species in pen sketches in the text. Both author and artist are to be congratulated upon a most attractive and authoritative book.—W. S.

Taka-Tsukasa's 'The Birds of Nippon.'—The second part² of this handsomely gotten-up work is before us, covering the physiography of the country and a continuation of the Gallinaceous birds, two races of *Syrmatiscus soemmerringii* and two of *Phasianus versicolor* being considered.

The high standard of the former part is fully maintained, the original description of each species or subspecies is given in full with a more detailed modern description where necessary, and in the synonymy all of the recent papers by Japanese authors are cited.

¹ Traveling | with the Birds | A Book on | Bird Migration | By | Rudyerd Boulton | Division of Birds | Field Museum of Natural History | Illustrated by | Walter Alois Weber | M. A. Donohue & Company | Chicago, New York | 1933. Pp. 64 pll. 12.

² The Birds of Nippon | By | Prince Taka-Tsukasa | [titles] | Volume I | Part 2 | Physiography | Order Galli | H. F. & G. Witherby 326 High Holborn, London, W. C. 1. Yokendo 7 Moyozono-Cho, Kojimachi-Ku, Tokyo, 20th April, 1933. Pp. V-XXVII + 71-128.

There are three excellent colored plates from paintings by N. Higashi presenting not only the forms described, but hybrids as well, while five beautifully printed photographic plates in brown and green on tinted paper depict habitats, nest of *P. v. versicolor* etc. There is also a large folded physiographical map of the Japanese Empire.

We cannot too strongly praise the completeness of Prince Taka-Tsukasa's treatment of his subject.—W. S.

Stuart Baker's 'Nidification of Birds of the Indian Empire.'—Volume II of this excellent work¹ has recently appeared and fully maintains the high standard set by Volume I which we reviewed in the April issue of 'The Auk.' In the present instalment our author has treated the thrushes, flycatchers, shrikes, warblers, orioles, starlings and related families. Six half-tone plates from photographs illustrate nests and habitats.

Upon glancing through the pages of Mr. Baker's book we are impressed with the extent of his knowledge not only of his subject but of the literature relating to it and with the manner in which he has made good reading of what might easily have been tedious compilation.

His account of the nest-making of the Tailor-bird is particularly interesting. The bird, he tells us, usually employs vegetable cotton or cobwebs for her "thread" and with this she sews together the edges of a single pendant leaf or of two adjacent leaves puncturing them with her slender bill and knotting the threads, in some way not yet ascertained. Other near-by leaves are often sewed to the first ones rarely four or more. The nest proper is built inside the pocket formed by the sewn leaves. Silk from cocoons is sometimes used for sewing and when nesting near human habitations, bits of cotton, silk, or thread are often stolen for the purpose.

In making use of human assistance in the matter of nesting material or nest sites it is amusing to read that the Magpie-Robin often builds in the little spirit or "Pi" houses erected by superstitious natives for wandering spirits to dwell in!

Mr. Baker in his volumes has reached the highest point in "oological" literature and we wish that more of the countless "oölogists" could follow his example in making real use of their collections.—W. S.

A Vermont Bird List.—The Department of Agriculture of Vermont has published a very handy list of the birds of the state by Messrs. H. C. Fortner, Wendell P. Smith, and E. J. Dole.²

Two hundred and ninety-eight species and subspecies are listed, some

¹ The Nidification | of | Birds of the Indian Empire | By | E. C. Stuart Baker, C.I.E., O.B.E., F.Z.S., etc. | Volume II | Turdidae—Sturnidae. | with six plates. | London: | Taylor and Francis, Red Lion Court, Fleet Street, E. C. 4. | 31st May, 1933. Pp. i-vi + 1-564.

² A List of Vermont Birds (With descriptions appended) Bulletin No. 41. By H. C. Fortner, Wendell P. Smith, and E. J. Dole. Published by Department of Agriculture E. H. Jones, Commissioner [1933]. Pp. 1-54.