

## RECENT LITERATURE.

**Hellmayr's 'Catalogue of Birds of the Americas.'**—The long awaited seventh part of this notable work<sup>1</sup> has appeared, covering the families Corvidae to Sylviidae in almost the order of the A. O. U. 'Check-List,' with the neotropical family Zeledoniidae between the Turdidae and Sylviidae. The volume follows exactly the style of its predecessors, with the same abundance of foot notes discussing characters and relationships of many of the forms, and will, we are sure, prove of the same importance to systematic students of the avifauna of the Americas. It brings the subject up to July 1, 1932.

It is impossible in the space at our disposal to discuss all of the innovations in systematic arrangement and in nomenclature which are presented by Dr. Hellmayr in these pages and we shall have to be content, for the most part, with a comparison of his findings in regard to North American Birds with those of the A. O. U. Committee, as expressed in the fourth edition of the 'Check-List.'

The author is very conservative in his treatment of genera six of those recognized in the 'Check-List' being merged with others—*Penthestes* and *Baeolophus* with *Parus*; *Telmatodytes* with *Cistothorus*; *Nannus* with *Troglodytes*; *Arceuthornis* with *Turdus*; *Corthylio* with *Regulus*—going back in every case but one to the treatment of the first edition of the 'Check-List,' in 1886, so does the pendulum swing from one extreme to the other and back again! Generic division is largely a matter of personal opinion and while there is much to be said in favor of some of Dr. Hellmayr's actions it seems a pity that two well-marked groups like the Long- and Short-billed Marsh Wrens should have to be merged simply because of the discovery of a more or less intermediate species in South America. Among purely neotropical genera we find *Pheugopedius* and *Thryophilus* merged with *Thryothorus*.

Dr. Hellmayr apparently rejects the reviewer's argument which was adopted by the A. O. U. Committee, that the type localities of species based on Catesby should be decided on the first revisor principle and not by arbitrarily accepting Charleston as the type locality (cf. Auk, 1929, pp. 447-454). Thus he adopts Oberholser's name *bromia* for the Northern Blue Jay restricting *cristata* to the Florida bird. On the other hand, however, he rejects the same author's name *cookei* for the Northern White-breasted Nuthatch ruling that in this case the Charleston bird is referable to the northern race—a good example of the uncertainty of this method of disposing of the names based on Catesby, while the first revisor principle would effect an immediate and permanent settlement.

While three full species of the 'Check-List' are reduced to subspecies of European species—*Nannus hiemalis* to *Troglodytes troglodytes*; *Corvus brachyrhynchos* to *C. corone* and *Regulus satrapa* to *R. regulus*; *Certhia americana*, for years regarded as a subspecies of the European *C. familiaris*, is set up as a distinct species. Other species reduced to subspecies are: *Pica nuttalli* to *P. pica*; *Amphelocoma californica* (and all its races including also *A. insularis*) to *A. coerulescens* (the Florida Jay); *Xanthoura*

<sup>1</sup> Catalogue of Birds of the Americas | and the Adjacent Islands | in | Field Museum of Natural History | including all species and subspecies known to occur in North America, | Mexico, Central America, South America, the West Indies, and | Islands of the Caribbean Sea, the Galapagos Archipelago, | and other Islands which may be Included on | Account of their Faunal Affinities | By | Charles E. Hellmayr | Associate Curator of Birds | Part VII | Corvidae, Paridae, Sittidae, Certhiidae, Chamaeidae, | Cinclidae, Troglodytidae, Prunellidae, Mimidae, | Turdidae, Zeledoniidae, Sylviidae | Wilfred H. Osgood | Curator, Department of Zoology | Editor | Field Museum of Natural History Publication 330. Zool. Series, Vol. XIII, Chicago, U. S. A., November 15, 1934, pp. i-vi + 1-531.

*luxuosa* to *X. yncas*; *Perisoreus griseus* and *obscurus* to *P. canadensis*; *Thryomanes brevicauda* to *T. bewicki*; *Turdus confinis* to *T. migratorius* and, most amazing, *Corvus brachyrhynchos caurinus* transferred as a subspecies to the Fish Crow (*C. ossifragus*). While this northwestern coast bird has been regarded as a distinct species by some and called a "fish crow" on account of habits and voice, it has nothing to do with the Fish Crow of our southern Atlantic coast. The latter is uniform highly glossy above and below of a bluish or greenish cast, while *caurinus* is a duller bird with a somewhat shell-like pattern on the back and of a reddish-purple or violet cast, resembling in all these characters the common American Crow (*C. brachyrhynchos*) (cf. Rhoads, Auk, 1893, p. 21; Stone, Auk, 1903, p. 271). The names of two forms of *Auriparus* are changed, as a result of Grinnell's study of the type of *A. flaviceps*, and *Baeolophus i. griseus* becomes *Parus i. ridgwayi* as a result of lumping *Baeolophus* with *Parus* there being a prior *Parus griseus*.

All of these changes, it will be noticed, are due to a difference of opinion as to the ornithological relationship of species and subspecies and there is only one change in a North American bird name due to "nomenclature" (which is usually blamed for all our changes in names!) and this is the use of *sordida* in place of *sieberi* as the specific name of the Arizona Jay the former name having priority. This is certainly a matter for congratulation! Dr. Hellmayr recognizes all of the subspecies of the 'Check-List' with the exception of *Polioptila melanura abbreviata* which he regards as identical with *P. m. margaritae*, while in addition he recognizes four forms of *Perisoreus canadensis* not included in the 'Check-List' i. e.; *nigricapillus*, *barboursi*, *albescens* and *rathbuni*. Also *Sialia sialis grata*, *Catherpes mexicanus polioptilus* and *Cyanosylvia suecica robusta* (as distinct from *S. s. suecica*). Six races described after the 'Check-List' was in press, mainly by van Rossem, are also recognized.

While it would be ungenerous to offer any criticism of such a welcome, useful, and painstaking work as that which Dr. Hellmayr is producing for us, we necessarily cannot all see eye to eye on all matters of ornithological relationships and the methods of expressing them. Personally we find no reason for relegating certain apparently distinct forms to the grade of subspecies of other species even if we abandon entirely the criterion of intergradation as our distinguishing mark between species and subspecies (see *antea* p. 31) but perhaps that is exactly what Dr. Hellmayr has done! At any rate in discussing the San Lucas Robin which, so far as we know, has never been claimed to intergrade with *Turdus migratorius propinquus* he says, "obviously merely an excessively pale race of the Robin" and makes no claim for intergradation. Apparently Dr. Hellmayr's groupings are based on the "Formenkreis" idea rather than upon intergradation.

At any rate we offer our hearty congratulations and thanks for another volume of this indispensable work and the hope that the author may be able to complete his task at no very distant date. The eighth part we are informed is already in type.—W. S.

**Friedmann on 'The Instinctive Emotional Life of Birds.'**—This notable paper<sup>1</sup> is, we are informed, the first of a series of studies on 'The Evolution of Instincts and Emotions' arranged and edited by Dr. Ben Karpman and was read before the Washington Society for Nervous and Mental Diseases.

Beginning with an historical account of the literature of the subject Dr. Friedmann finds one group of writers, wholly uncritical, "who assume an anthropomorphic attitude and endow birds with all of the virtues and, curiously enough, none of the

<sup>1</sup> The Instinctive Emotional Life of Birds. By Herbert Friedmann. The Psychoanalytic Review, Vol. XXI, Nos. 3 and 4, July and October, 1934. Reprint, pages 1-57.