

Mirafra javanica aliena (p. 50), and *Anihus australis exiguus* (p. 53). The notes refer mainly to relationship and plumage but the stomach contents of a number of specimens are given, the insects identified by Dr. Philip Darlington. We note that eighteen Birds of Paradise and Bower Birds were obtained on the expedition.

Mr. Greenway has done a good piece of work in his study of this collection and has made a valuable contribution to the ornithology of New Guinea.—W. S.

van Rossem on Birds of Middle America.—As a result of his examination of types in various European museums and his study of Central American and Mexican collections in the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy, Mr. van Rossem has published a composite paper¹ on Middle American birds which adds greatly to our systematic knowledge.

The first section relates to the birds of Guatemala and is supplementary to, and critical of, Griscom's admirable work on the birds of this country. Besides adding several species to the list and straightening out the nomenclature of others the following new forms are proposed: *Burhinus bistriatus vigilans* (p. 388), Costa Rica; *Coccyzus minor continentalis* (p. 389), El Salvador; *C. m. cozumelae* (p. 390), and *Xanthoura luxuosa cozumelae* (p. 397), Cozumel Isl.; *X. l. centralis* (p. 397), Guatemala; *Pheugopedius pleurostictus oblitus* (p. 399), El Salvador; *Mimus gilvus clarus* (p. 401), Quintana Roo, Mex.; and *Granatellus sallaai griscomi* (p. 403) and *Zarhynchus wagleri ridgwayi* (p. 405), Costa Rica.

The second section of the paper deals with the types of Middle American birds in foreign museums and their identity. In this connection *Caprimulgus vociferus setosus* (p. 408) is proposed for *C. v. macromystax* Wagler, which proves to be a synonym of *C. v. vociferus*.

Mr. van Rossem's last section is an annotated list of William Brewster's Mexican collections now in the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy made by Abbott Fraser, Cahoon and McLeod. Itineraries of the three are presented and then a complete list of their material.

In this the following new forms are proposed: *Ortalis wagleri griseiceps* (p. 431), *Anthoscenus constantii surdus* (p. 439), *Trogon elegans canescens* (p. 441), *Turdus rufopalliatu grisor* (p. 461), *Vireo hypochryseus nitidus* (p. 465), *V. solitarius pini-colus* (p. 467), *Pheucticus chrysopeplus dilutus* (p. 479), *Pipilo masculatus griseipygius* (p. 482), *P. fuscus perpallidus* (p. 483), *Aimophila quinquestriata septentrionalis* (p. 485), and *A. bilineata confinis* (p. 487).

These collections were made from 1884 to 1888 and after describing a few novelties Mr. Brewster did no further work upon them. It will be a satisfaction to his friends that the material that he brought together has at last been studied and the results made available to all. Mr. van Rossem is to be congratulated upon a valuable contribution to the ornithology of a region upon which he is at present one of our leading authorities.—W. S.

Mousley on the Woodcock.—The entire January issue of the 'Canadian Field Naturalist' is devoted to a paper by Mr. Henry Mousley on the Woodcock—both the English and the American species, beginning with certain ancient drawings of the bird in the Emma Shearer Wood Library in McGill University and coming down to the most recent field observations of American and British ornithologists.

One will find in this paper a summary of the various theories and facts regarding the anatomy of the birds, the movement of the upper mandible, the source of the various noises made both in the air and on the ground, the carrying of the young and

¹ Critical Notes on Middle American Birds. By A. J. van Rossem. Bull. Museum Comp. Zoölogy, Vol. LXXVII, No. 7. December, 1934. Pp. 387-490.

the protective or luring value of the tail coloration. Mr. Mousley has done a good service in bringing together for handy reference all of this matter. His discovery of very early knowledge of the bill movement was previously presented in 'The Auk' for July, 1934.—W. S.

Whistler's 'Popular Handbook of Indian Birds.'—The first edition of this notable work¹ appeared in 1928 (see *Auk* 1928, p. 389) and has proven so desirable that a new edition has been demanded. In the first edition a selection of 250 of the more common Indian birds was presented for detailed treatment, covering those most frequently encountered. In the present edition these have been increased to 275, while brief mention is made of some 230 others, so that the book now presents information on approximately 500 species which include the birds of all parts of India with the exception of some of the rarest forms.

Not only has the text been amplified in this and other ways but three additional plates have been prepared, one of them in colors, making twenty in all.

Such a handbook is invaluable to the resident or visiting ornithologist, while to residents of other countries unable to visit India it will furnish interesting information on species entirely unknown in their own faunas. Of the Green Bee-eater, a bird somewhat allied to the Kingfisher, we read: "It is one of the commonest birds of India, and attracts attention from its beautiful coloration and from its favorite perch being on the telegraph-wires. * * * It spends its life hawking for insects from a perch to which it returns after every flight and only visits the ground for nesting purposes. The eggs are laid in a chamber reached by a tunnel usually excavated in the face of a perpendicular bank." There are also interesting accounts of the numerous Cuckoos one of which, the large black Koel, is parasitic on the Crow. The book is one that should be in every well selected ornithological library.—W. S.

Yeates on 'The Life of the Rook.'—This excellent book² is at once a careful study of bird behavior and a dissertation on tree-top photography, upon which art the author is an authority. This big bare-faced Crow is of especial interest to American bird students since it possesses characteristics, both of appearance and habits, quite different from our familiar Crow of the United States while its gregariousness at nesting time recalls our smaller coastal Fish Crow. Its very name, too, is familiar in the word "rookery" originally referring to its own nesting communities but now generally used in this country in connection with Herons, Pelicans and other colony-nesting species. The bird too, is familiar to us by its frequent mention in the stories of so many British writers of fiction as of almost universal occurrence about the old English country seats.

Our author's first interest in Rooks was in his boyhood egg collecting days when their tree-top nesting habits challenged his ability to reach their homes. Then with his success in scaling the trees and his interest in photography they became his favorite study. The whole life of the bird is covered in the chapters: Nesting, Courtship, Period of Incubation, After Hatching, Summer and Autumn, Winter. The author brings out some very interesting features such as "mobbing" mating birds by other members of the rookery, which he thinks is only done in the case of promiscuous

¹ Popular Handbook of | Indian Birds | By Hugh Whistler, F.Z.S. | Late Indian (Imperial) Police | Illustrated with twenty full-page plates (ninety-five figures) | of which five are coloured, and ninety-six figures | in the text, from drawings by H. Grönvold | Second Edition | Gurney and Jackson | London: 33 Paternoster Row, E. C. | Edinburgh: Tweeddale Court | 1935. Pp. i-xxvii + 1-513. Price 15 shillings net.

² The Life of the Rook | By | G. K. Yeates | Part Author of *Bird Haunts in Wild Britain* | With 22 illustrations | from Photographs by the Author | Philip Allen | London | 69 Great Russell St., W. C. 1. 1934. Pp. 1-95. Price, 10 shillings, 6 pence, net.