

insects eaten by birds, that "availability undoubtedly is the chief factor involved" is granted but his further deduction that "the phenomena classed by theorists as protective adaptations have little or no effectiveness," is not.

Prof. Sumner's object in his experiments is to demonstrate that there is such a thing as survival value in protective coloration and he regrets that the extravagant claims of some writers have led many biologists to discard the whole theory. He has done an important piece of work and demonstrated the possibility of convincing proofs through actual experiment.—W. S.

**Mitchell's 'The Passenger Pigeon in Ontario.'**—In spite of the many publications on the Passenger Pigeon there seems to be much information still to be obtained and the present publication<sup>1</sup> is a striking example of what can be done even at this late day. In 1926 the Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology issued a questionnaire with the object of securing information on the bird from those who remembered it and Miss Mitchell has been engaged in tabulating this information and in collecting a mass of additional data from early Canadian and American literature. The result is the most important history of the bird, so far as care in selection and use of data and in scientific method of treatment are concerned, that has yet appeared and the Museum authorities as well as the author deserve great praise for prosecuting such a piece of research.

It is impossible in the space at our disposal to begin to describe the information condensed in this publication which our readers must study for themselves; but it would seem that every angle of the Pigeon problem had been considered. There are long tables of nesting colonies, occurrences at other times and migrations; for all of the counties of Ontario, and much information for other parts of the continent, as well as interesting discussions of the various phases of the life of the bird, its destruction, etc.

Among the most important items are a reproduction in colors of a painting of the bird made by William Pope in 1835 and an old newspaper cut of a Pigeon flight in northern Louisiana sketched by Smith Bennett, showing the flock spread out on a rather wide company front but stretching away to the horizon like a column of smoke. There are also many other comments on the form of the flock.

The last specimen still extant for Ontario seems to be one in Mr. J. H. Fleming's collection taken on October 11, 1890, although there are "sight records" as late as 1902! There is also a photograph of the Pigeon habitat group in the Royal Ontario Museum.—W. S.

**A Soil Conservation Bird Bulletin.**—Ross O. Stevens of the Deep River, North Carolina, Soil Conservation Project has compiled a leaflet intended to interest school children in birds and to encourage outdoor bird study. Attention is drawn to the usefulness of birds, and notes are given on methods of attracting birds. The publication<sup>2</sup> contains reproductions of 6 larger colored bird pictures by J. L. Ridgway, and of 18 smaller ones by Lynn Bogue Hunt. It sets a fine example for Soil Conservation workers, who, recent developments indicate, may constitute one of the most important of our general conservation groups.—W. L. M.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Passenger Pigeon in Ontario.* By Margaret H. Mitchell. Contrib. Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology, No. 7, 1935. Pp. 1-181. Price \$1.00 paper bound; \$1.50 bound in cloth.

<sup>2</sup> *Helping our Bird Friends*, 15 pp., line drawings and colored figures, High Point, N. Car., Sept. 1935.