

sider that the bird intentionally carries its young in flight but rather that a brooding bird, crouching closer on the approach of danger gets one of the young between its thighs and, flushing in the stiff legged position of the "injury-feigning" flight, lifts the young and carries it for a short distance. The "heavy" flight often cited as evidence that the bird was carrying some burden is merely a part of the "injury-feigning" performance. The latter by the way is attributed, as suggested by Dr. Herbert Friedman, to a conflict of fear and love of nest and young, and not the result of instinct or intelligence in an effort to lead an intruder away from the spot.

Dr. Pettingill finds that the male Woodcock has a domain that is divided into a wooded or brushy feeding area where it spends the day, and an open singing field to which it resorts at evening for its courtship performances. The female seeks the male on the singing field but her nesting area is usually at some distance and is rarely visited by the male who takes no part in the nest building or care of the young. Several females have been found together on the singing field which suggests, with reasonable probability, that the Woodcock "is at times at least polygamous." This seeking of the male by the female on his singing field recalls the similar action of gallinaceous birds which are notoriously polygamous and curiously enough the author's observations on the feeding habits of the young which accompany the female and are assisted by her in obtaining food, are also reminiscent of the gallinaceous birds.

Dr. Pettingill spent a few days during two autumns at Cape May Point, N. J., to observe the concentrated migration of the Woodcock but apparently did not witness a typical flight when the birds come in off the ocean in vast numbers having been blown off shore by the north-west winds. He does not adequately describe the enormous numbers of the birds that are killed by gunners on these occasions nor the difficulty of enforcing either bag or season limits when the entire community is in sympathy with the gunners who cannot withstand the temptation for slaughter which has been their privilege for time immemorial. We are confident that more Woodcock are killed at a few such strategic spots than in all the rest of the country combined and unless shooting there is stopped entirely the Woodcock is doomed.

Local gunners and wardens alike will insist that the Woodcock is as plentiful as ever partly because they really think so, not realizing that the congested flights represent not local birds but the entire Woodcock crop of the east; and partly because they dread more restrictions if they admit that the birds are decreasing.

Dr. Pettingill has given us a splendid summary of the Woodcock and its life history and let us hope has also shown the need of immediate action if this unique and interesting bird is to be saved from extermination.

A good bibliography and many interesting photographs of Woodcock and Woodcock haunts together with an excellent color plate by Sutton complete the monograph, which is well printed and free from typographical errors except that the name of Robert Ridgway is consistently misspelled.—W. S.

van Rossem on Birds of the Charleston Mountains, Nevada.¹—As is generally known Mr. van Rossem has made a number of trips to these interesting mountains in southern Nevada, which rise abruptly from a 3,000 ft. desert to an altitude of 12,000 ft., and in the present paper presents a study of the avifauna and its relationships. We have already noticed his publication of four new forms peculiar to the range.

¹ Cooper Ornithological Club Pacific Coast Avifauna Number 24. Birds of the Charleston Mountains, Nevada. By A. J. van Rossem. San Diego Society of Natural History, Berkeley, California. Published by the Club. May 1, 1936. Pp. 1-65.

Only seventy-eight residents and summer residents have been found in the range and the nearby Sheep Mountains from which a few specimens were obtained. Of the fifty-three species and subspecies found in the Upper Sonoran or higher zones, thirty-seven are of general western or Great Basin distribution, eleven are similar, or most closely related, to races of the Inyo region to the westward, while eleven have closest relation to Rocky Mountain forms. There is no instance of a Sierran or trans-Sierran identity except for four wide ranging species.

The author discusses the physical features of the range with illustrations of characteristic scenery, following which is a well annotated list of the birds. Isolated ranges such as the Charlestons are always interesting in their faunal relationships and Mr. van Rossem has done an excellent piece of field work in making the explorations upon which his report is based.—W. S.

Books on British Birds.—We recently had the pleasure of reviewing Turner's 'Every Garden a Bird Sanctuary' the first of Witherby's 'Bird Lovers' Manuals,' and now we have before us two additional volumes of this series of popular books on the birds of Old England.

Norman H. Joy presents a handy field book 'How to Know the British Birds,' somewhat after the fashion of Peterson's 'A Field Guide to the Birds [of N. America].' There are two series of illustrations one from pencil sketches showing the birds in their most characteristic attitudes; the other figures in color of the most strikingly marked species. The several orders of British birds are then distinguished on the basis of characteristic species following which are brief descriptions of the species in which field characters, size, distribution and nests are considered. While there are no "keys" the necessary information is clearly presented and the most important points italicized. Dr. Joy very properly emphasizes shape and action rather than color as it is upon these that the trained bird student learns to rely for, in many cases, owing to poor position or light conditions, color cannot be satisfactorily determined. This little book cannot but prove of great assistance to the beginner whose aim is to know his birds, as well as to the visitor from other lands who would make acquaintance with the English species.

Another delightful little volume² in the same series is R. M. Lockley's 'Birds of the Green Belt' pointing out what birds may be seen in the environs of London and describing their haunts with many interesting allusions to other forms of life, both animal and plant, and much historical data on the regions described. Besides being a storehouse of local items of natural history the book is a fine piece of English composition and will be read with interest by many not especially devoted to science. The author is a true nature lover as is shown by his appreciation of other fields than his own, when he replies to a friend's query as to how he can "get a kick out of birds"; "A kick of that sort," he replies, "can even be got out of a study of snails if you are keen enough."

Mr. Lockley's book will also prove invaluable to the tourist as well as to the city resident who would become better acquainted with the rural surroundings of the great city and their wild life.—W. S.

Brooks' Plates of North American Birds.—'The National Geographic Magazine'³ has issued two installments of the plates of North American birds being

¹ How to Know the Birds. By Norman H. Joy. Pp. 1-136; Ppl. 1-40. March 17, 1936. H. F. & G. Witherby, 326 High Holborn, London. Price 5 shillings net.

² Birds of the Green Belt. By R. M. Lockley. Pp. 1-236, several half-tone plates and numerous text-figures. April 2, 1936. H. F. & G. Witherby, 326 High Holborn, London. Price 5 shillings.

³ National Geographic Magazine for April and June, 1936.