

CONSERVATION NOTES

BY FRANCIS H. ALLEN

CONSERVATIONISTS in general are anxious about the fate of the Barkley Stream Purification Bill, which, with the Mundt Amendment added in the House—without which the bill is toothless—is still in joint committee, the House having stood by its guns and refused to follow the Senate in rejecting the amendment.

THE act providing permanent protection for the Bald Eagle was passed by Congress this summer and signed by the President. Unfortunately the protection is not extended to Alaska, where the Eagle's fondness for fish makes it unpopular in certain influential quarters.

THE National Association of Audubon Societies has been investigating the methods of control of fish-eating birds about fish-hatcheries and rearing-ponds, and has concluded that the one satisfactory method is by screening and fencing.

THE radio is becoming more and more useful in spreading a knowledge of birds and their protection. Dr. Gustav Swanson, Assistant Professor of Economic Zoology in the University of Minnesota, sends us a sample script of a fifteen-minute broadcast about Minnesota birds given under the auspices of the State Department of Conservation.

THE International Committee for Bird Preservation (1006 Fifth Avenue, New York) has issued a leaflet entitled 'Notes on Wildlife Protection in Chile,' by T. Gilbert Pearson, which provides food for thought and stimulus to action for American ornithologists. It lists thirty-two species of North American birds that have been recorded in Chile. These include twenty-three shorebirds, and no law prevents their killing nor imposes a bag-limit.

THE estimated population of ducks and geese in North America in January, 1940, was in the neighborhood of 65,000,000, according to Wildlife Leaflet BS-165, 'The Status of Migratory Game Birds: 1939-40,' issued in June by the Biological Survey (now the Fish and Wildlife Service). This showed an estimated increase of about fifteen per cent over January, 1939. The same report declared the future of the White-winged Dove as a game species to be doubtful, on account of losses from both shooting and natural predation.

ANOTHER interesting and valuable document is the Report of the Senate Special Committee on the Conservation of Wildlife Resources issued this year under the title of 'The Status of Wildlife in the United States.' It contains 457 pages and 74 plates and includes the complete text of all Federal laws and treaties relating to wildlife, besides reports of the various governmental bureaus concerned. This committee has been continued by unanimous vote of the Senate.

THE August number of 'The Gull,' organ of the Audubon Association of the Pacific, contains a paper by Laidlaw Williams on the history of the White-tailed Kite in California with remarks on its chances of survival. He finds it impossible to determine whether or not the bird is holding its own. It has been protected by law since 1905, but it is still occasionally shot and there is still some illegal traffic in its eggs. Suggestions for its protection have been sent to the National Association of Audubon Societies, at whose suggestion the investigation was made.

THE increase in the duck population over last year has encouraged the Fish and Wildlife Service to establish an open season of sixty days instead of the forty-five days of last year. The regulations have been otherwise 'liberalized,' but the bag-limit has been reduced on geese and doves, and the open season on Woodcock is cut to fifteen days because of the mortality in the South last winter. Ornithologists, as well as sportsmen, should watch the effect of changes in the regulations. Baiting and live decoys are still prohibited.