

CONSERVATION NOTES

BY FRANCIS H. ALLEN

IN September the Federal Migratory Bird Commission approved the purchase of fourteen new waterfowl refuges with a total of nearly seventy-thousand acres. The purchases include areas in twelve States from Massachusetts and Vermont to Louisiana and Washington. The Okefinokee Refuge in Georgia, with its more than thirty-two thousand acres, is the largest.

THE National Association of Audubon Societies, now operating under the shorter name of 'National Audubon Society,' has uncovered an alarming situation in the use of feathers for millinery. We had come to the belief that the fight against this particular evil, begun by the American Ornithologists' Union in 1884 and continued for years, especially by the Audubon Societies, had long since been won. Now, however, it appears, as set forth in 'Bird-Lore' for September-October, 1940, that fashion encourages the use of the quills of eagles, swans, pelicans, herons, and albatrosses, besides those of South American condors and other foreign birds, and pheasant quills not all of which are from domesticated birds. Most of this traffic is clearly illegal and can be stopped by vigilant enforcement of the law, but there are loopholes in the law that encourage evasion and that should be closed by new legislation. The provision that plumage imported before 1913 may be sold and worn legally should certainly be repealed after the passage of twenty-seven years has allowed dealers to dispose of their stock; and a change in the section relating to the use of feathers in the making of fishing-flies is demanded, so as to prevent the diversion of such feathers to the adornment of women's hats. Readers of 'The Auk' will naturally do all they can to assist in the promotion of the needed legislation as well as in the enforcement of the existing law.

THE change of the name of the National Association of Audubon Societies to 'National Audubon Society,' though in some ways an improvement, is not giving universal satisfaction on account of the tendency to shorten the name still further by omitting the word 'National' and so leading to confusion with the State Audubon Societies, some of which have been *the Audubon Society* at home for many years.

DIRECTOR John H. Baker reports in the September-October 'Bird-Lore' that last January's freeze in Texas worked much havoc among Brown Pelicans, Spoonbills, herons, and egrets, chiefly through cutting off their food-supply, but that the discovery of several new colonies somewhat offset the bad news. There are ups and downs in the populations of these large southern waterbirds, but the outlook, on the whole, seems not too discouraging.

THREE or four years ago the writer took occasion to publish in the pages of the 'Bulletin of the Massachusetts Audubon Society' an appeal for support of 'The Auk' as the leading ornithological journal in America and the organ of the ornithologists who have made possible the study of birds in this country and to whom all bird-lovers owe a debt of gratitude that should be paid, in part, in the dollars and cents of membership dues for the A. O. U. This appeal met with some success—not so much as I had hoped, but some. Now I should like to make a similar appeal to ornithologists to do all they can to support the Audubon Societies, national and State, in their work to preserve the birds that the members of the A. O. U. study. Membership in the National Audubon Society, including the subscription to 'Bird-Lore,' costs but \$5.00 a year, and State society dues are always, I think, considerably less. I know that many ornithologists are already faithful supporters of this work, but I am sure that the Audubon Societies would like to have this support made unanimous.