

## THE CONDOR.

Bulletin of the

### COOPER ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB OF CALIFORNIA.

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### EDITORIAL

**Signs of the Times.** Working as it is for the interests and advancement of Californian ornithology, which is at present prominently represented by the Cooper Ornithological Club, THE CONDOR trusts it will be pardoned for confining its editorial reflections largely to various phases of the Club's work, and again for perhaps sticking too closely to its text in this direction. The fact remains that the interests of a large Club membership must be served at all times, and these are as varied as they are important to the well-being of the organization.

It appears, if we interpret the signs correctly, that there are scarcely any latent ornithological forces in California, and that a very great percentage of the active workers have been aroused and are now engaged in a general movement. Perhaps never before have so many individuals in the state been at work toward a general consolidation of interests as at the present time.

The greater the force at work, the greater the general good which will result, and the closer these forces are united, the more potent will be the work accomplished. It would be hard to estimate in any sense the material results of the work accomplished by the Club within the nine years of its existence, but be that as it may, we know that a substantial organization has been perfected, that a large number of formerly inactive ornithologists have been interested in the work, and that the

Club while serving its purpose of concentrating the efforts of our older workers, offers also the best possible "training school" for the large number of ornithologists who rise up each year. Thus the intent and effects of the Club are progressive.

Without reviewing its early history and subsequent progress, we may now believe that the Club has thrown about itself the safe-guards necessary to its permanent establishment. And yet it has reached only the beginning of its usefulness! In this connection we may very properly consider the recent action of the American Ornithologists' Union with reference to its revision of membership, since the matter presents several phases of especial interest to Californians. The retention of the limit of 50 Fellows seems altogether a wise re-consideration of the question, since this number seems ample to dictate the affairs of the Union. It is gratifying that of the five new Fellows elected, one representative was given California.

The creation of the intermediate class known as Members should satisfy those who have demanded the separation of the true amateur ornithologists from those who have but a nominal, "popular" interest in the study. While Members have no voice in the affairs of the Union, the creation of this class seems a step nearer the solution of the vexed problem of membership. Of a possible 75, but 55 Members were elected, leaving 20 vacancies to be filled at future sessions. Of the 55 elected, the District of Columbia was allotted 11, California came second with 9, Massachusetts third with 8, New York 6, Pennsylvania, 5, Connecticut, 3, and thirteen other states and territories one each. This action may be regarded as a substantial endorsement of the activity amongst Californian workers, and in the creation of this condition the Club has been largely instrumental.

We have deemed it advisable to mention the adoption of three editorial rules which are considered to contribute to uniformity and the better make-up of this magazine. All three refer to the names of animals or plants that may be published herein.

1. Hereafter the possessive s will be omitted in all cases where it is now used in common names of animals and plants, unless a contributor expressly requests the retention of such possessive. This is by no means an innovation in THE CONDOR, as it was introduced over a year ago, and several authors have since voluntarily adopted this form. The reason why *Clarke's crow* is best written *Clarke crow* has been discussed elsewhere in this journal [CONDOR III, 2, p. 51], but suffice it to say here that the personal name is given in the sense of a dedication, no particular ownership being

intended or implied. Hence the personal name is best written in the form in which it usually stands in dedication, namely, without the possessive. THE CONDOR is taking no initiative in this matter as the form has been used for many years by the National Board of Geographic Names, by the Divisions of Forestry and Biological Survey of the U. S. Agricultural Department, and by independent writers. This form we believe is destined to become generally used.

2. A single *i* will be used in the genitive singular in scientific specific and subspecific names; e.g., *Zonotrichia leucophrys nuttalli*, not *nuttalli*. In other words the genitive will be formed by adding a single *i* to the unchanged name of the person in whose honor the species is named. It appears to us that the double *i* subserves so little to euphony in comparison with the labor and inconvenience of memorizing its inconsistencies, that the time has arrived when working ornithologists were shed of the nuisance. It is a well known fact that numberless cases occur where the same name has been written with a single *i*, and in a different combination with a double *i*. *Phalacroptilus nuttallii* appears to us as euphonic as *Zonotrichia l. nuttalli*. As Dr. Allen has said, there is no rule by which one may memorize the occurrence of the two spellings, and the time and tried patience involved in editing manuscripts has led us to bring the subject before our contributors. We will not enter into any philological discussion of the question, but may remark that we believe the 'single-*i*-ists' have as good an argument to offer as the 'double-*i*-ists'. We emphasize *convenience* and *uniformity* which are really the most important matters. This likewise has been in use in THE CONDOR the past year.

3. Trivial or common names of animals and plants, occurring in the text will hereafter be printed in lower case, except of course where a capital letter is obviously necessary, as in personal or geographic qualifying words; e.g., *California towhee*, *Harris woodpecker*, but spurred towhee. Generic names that have become popularly accepted trivial names, as *junco*, will likewise begin with a small letter. This rule is rather widely followed now in publications, and the added neatness given to a page is marked. In closing we might add that in annotated bird lists the trivial name is written essentially in an independent subjective form, and hence bears capitals; e.g.

*Pipilo maculatus megalonyx*. Spurred Towhee.

THE CONDOR publishes, as it believes, the first half-tone photograph yet to appear of the famed wingless cormorant. Thus "the world do move" and the camera has portrayed to

American ornithologists this strange bird which sports in the treacherous surf of the Galapagos.

We regret the delay in mailing the index to Volume III, which is unavoidable. Mr. Richard C. McGregor, who has been compiling the index, issue by issue during the past year, found himself located in the Orient at the time our last number was issued. This necessitated the delay consequent upon the time required for the mail to travel both ways. The index will appear with our March number.

The CONDOR wishes its readers a Happy New Year and greets them with a change of cover and new cover design, typifying the land of the setting sun and its lordly condor. The design is by Mr. Walter K. Fisher.



## PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

PEARSON, T. GILBERT. Stories of Bird Life, B. F. Johnson Pub. Co., Richmond, Va. pp. 1-236 and numerous plates, 60 cents.

RIDGWAY, ROBERT. The Birds of North and Middle America. Part I. Family Fringillidae—The Finches. (Bulletin of the U. S. N. M. No. 50, 1901.

ROBISON, WIRT and RICHMOND, C. W. An Annotated List of Birds Collected in the vicinity of La Guaira, Venezuela. (Proc. U. S. N. M., XXIV, pp. 163-178.)

*American Ornithology*, I, No. 12, Dec. 1901. II, No. 1, Jan. 1902.

*Auk*, The, XIX, No. 1, Jan. 1902.

*Bird-Lore*, III, No. 6, Nov.-Dec. 1901.

*Bird & Nature*, X, Nos. 4, 5, Nov., Dec., 1901.

*Bulletin No 50*, U. S. Nat. Museum.

*Journal of the Maine Ornithological Society*, III, No. 4, Oct. 1901.

*Maine Sportsman*, Nos. 99, 100, Nov., Dec. 1901.

*Nature Study*, II, No. 7, Dec. 1901.

*Ohio Naturalist*, II, Nos. 1, 2, Nov. Dec., 1901.

*Oologist*, The XVIII, Nos. II, 12, Nov.-Dec., *Ornithologisches Jahrbuch*, XII, No. 6, Nov.-Dec. 1901.

*Osprey*, The, V, Nos. 9, 10, Sept., Oct., 1901.

*Our Animal Friends*, XXIX, Nos. 4, 5, Dec. 1901, Jan., 1902.

*Our Dumb Animals*, XXXIV, Nos. 6, 7, Nov., Dec 1901.

*Plant World*, IV, Nos. 10, 11, Oct., Nov., 1901.

*Popular Science* XXXV, No. 12, Dec. 1901. XXXVI, No. 1, Jan. 1902.

*Recreation*, XV, Nos. 5, 6, Nov, Dec, 1901.

*West American Scientist*, XII, Nos. 6, 7, Nov., Dec., 1901.