

The atmospheric dryness makes the feathers more brittle and hence hastens the disintegration process resulting from attrition. The more intense and long-continued sunlight bleaches the colors at a greater rate.

The moral again, repeated here for the sake of emphasis, is that the true color characters of birds must be sought in freshly acquired plumages, and not in the "breeding dress" (often in a dilapidated condition) as has been so universally insisted upon.

The above contention that *oberholseri* is not after all a phylogenetic race, is not at all an argument against the recognition of minute differences in nomenclature, as would apparently be urged by Linton (cf. CONDOR X, July 1908, p. 181; and Kaeding, *idem*, XI, January 1909, p. 32), but rather points toward the need for greater care in discriminating subspecies.—J. GRINNELL, *University of California, Berkeley, California.*

The Early Western Surveys.—In Mr. Rockwell's interesting paper on "The History of Colorado Ornithology," in the January-February number of THE CONDOR there are several erroneous citations, which, coupled with a number of similar errors recently appearing in scientific publications, lead to the belief that a general account of several of the western surveys and their publications may be timely. For those who are familiar with the publications referred to, citations are not necessary, and if the references are not correct they are worse than useless to those for whom they are intended.

In the paper just referred to, Coues' "Birds of the Northwest" is attributed to the Bulletins of the United States Geological Survey, instead of to the Miscellaneous publications of the "Hayden Survey" of the Territories; and Henshaw's reports are attributed to the same survey, instead of to the "Wheeler Survey" of the region west of the one hundredth meridian. Ridgway's report on the Maxwell collection was first published, so far as I am able to learn, in 1879, in Mary Dartt's (now Mrs. Thompson) "On the Plains and Among the Peaks," instead of in 1877 as Mr. Rockwell has it. Afterward, according to Professor Cooke, it appeared in 1887 in "Field and Forest," a publication not now accessible to me. Either Mr. Rockwell's date is an error or both Professor Cooke and I have overlooked the earlier publication. However, that is of minor importance. The important item is the confusion of entirely distinct surveys.

The United States Geological and Geographical Survey of the Territories, under Dr. F. V. Hayden, began operations in 1867 and ceased field work in 1878, tho some of its publications did not appear until several years later. Its principal publications are contained in four distinct series, numbered separately, i. e., Bulletins, Annual Reports, Monographs or Final Reports, and Miscellaneous Publications, in addition to some unclassified papers. Each series contains papers on both fossil and recent plants and animals, and should be carefully distinguished to avoid misleading the reader who is not thoroly familiar with them. For instance, Coues' "Birds of the Northwest" cannot be found in the Bulletin of the Hayden Survey, but is No. 3 of Miscellaneous Publications, and is not in the United States Geological Survey publications at all, altho on the title page the words "and Geographical" are omitted, the words "of the Territories," which at once distinguish it from the present survey, being retained.

The United States Geographical [Explorations and] Surveys West of the One Hundredth Meridian (title varying somewhat on different publications), under Lieut. Geo. M. Wheeler, was in the field from 1869 to 1884, its chief publications being Annual Reports, Maps, and seven large quarto Final Reports or Monographs, of which Vol. V is of most importance in the matter of recent zoology and contains Henshaw's reports hereinbefore referred to.

The United States Geological Exploration of the Fortieth Parallel, under Clarence King, was in the field from 1871 to 1878 inclusive, its chief publications being an Atlas, Annual Reports, and several large quarto Final Reports or Monographs, about half of Vol. IV being devoted to ornithology.

The United States Geographical and Geological Survey of the Rocky Mountain Region, under J. W. Powell, published quite a number of special volumes from 1877 to 1880, not numbered in a serial way, such as the "Geology of the Henry Mountains," all of them being confined to geography in its limited sense, geology, paleontology and ethnology. The publications, together with a number of reports by Powell before the organization of the Rocky Mountain Region Survey, are briefly referred to as the Powell Survey Reports.

The foregoing were all western surveys, Hayden and Powell reporting to the Secretary of the Interior, Wheeler and King reporting to the Secretary of War, in accordance with the statutes under which they operated, and were entirely distinct surveys, tho their work to some extent overlapt. In 1879 the present United States Geological Survey, under the Interior Department, began operations; some of the other organizations at once, and all eventually ceasing field work. At the present time nearly all of the strictly geological and paleontological work of

the general government is carried on by the United States Geological Survey, its publications consisting of quite a number of distinct series, numbered separately, such as Annual Reports, Bulletins, Monographs, Professional Papers, Atlas Folios, etc. Since the organization of this survey, the work of the general government in recent botany and zoology has been carried on by the various bureaus of the Department of Agriculture, the National Museum and Smithsonian Institution, the incidental references to recent species become somewhat prominent in such Geological Survey papers as Dr. Arnold's "The Tertiary and Quaternary Pectens of California."

A complete set of the publications of these various surveys constitutes a good sized library, and unless reference to them really points one to the volume intended it would perhaps better be omitted altogether and thus avoid confusing future naturalists and bibliographers and sending them on "wild goose chases" similar to those from which some have recently returned. Anyone who expects to find Coues' "Birds of the Northwest," or Lesquereux' monographs, or Coues and Allen's "North American Rodentia," or Whitfield's report on Black Hills paleontology, in the publications of the United States Geological Survey, is doomed to disappointment. Let's all be careful with citations or omit them.

Bulletin No. 222 of the United States Geological Survey is a very useful table of contents and generalized index of the King, Hayden, Powell and Wheeler publications.

I have said nothing of the Pacific Railway Survey and earlier explorations, because there seems to be no confusion concerning them.—JUNIUS HENDERSON, *Boulder, Colorado*.

Winter Observations in Oregon.—The recent winter has been, for Oregon, one of great severity. The Willamette valley birds were given a sample of real winter; it came in the shape of a snow storm. An excellent opportunity was presented to the city man for bird study, for birds came to the towns in great numbers in search of food. Our usual winter friends of the wood were much in evidence and we were surprised to see, also, many of the birds which do not usually arrive until the spring. I had the pleasure of seeing birds whose habitats are far removed from each other eating crumbs together in perfect harmony. The Flicker came from the depths of his woody retreat to partake of a meal in company with a Meadowlark from the fields.

Chattering Juncos in sudden flurries swept continually by, and the dusky little Song Sparrows, aroused to greater activity than ever, seemed everywhere. Towhees and Robins were seen every now and then and a Jay or two flew over. From the nearby wood came Chickadees, Kinglets and great numbers of Alaska Robins.

The last named bird—known also as Varied Thrush, Flicker and Mountain Robin—is a most voracious fellow. Of course I opened lunch counters for the birds with the coming of the storm, and the Alaska Robins came near breaking me up in business! They prefer apples but there are few bird stuffs which they reject. The Flicker is a queer looker: that is, one cannot tell where he is looking because of a patch of black which surrounds the eyes making those organs invisible to us. The bird resembles the Robin in having a red breast. The male has, like the Woodpecker, a black crescent upon the breast, the neck is brownish yellow and the wings mottled, yellow and black.

It seemed surprising to see our usual summer birdlife here in the depth of winter. Larks drifted in by two's and three's and Horned Larks in bands. But the merry Lark was merry no longer nor did he soar as poets would fain have him to do: he was but a very cold and hungry bird. The Horned Larks trotted, quail-like, about the streets giving their short, unmusical call. The cold made these naturally shy birds almost fearless. Many persons did not recognize this bird as our summer friend. It scarcely looked familiar, we must admit, for the feathers were ruffed up and wings partly extended because of the cold. In summer the bird presents a most spick and span appearance.

Some of the Larks sat apart with heads wellnigh hidden in their bodies, looking most dejected. Not a few birds perished. Great numbers of quail have died. Alighting in the soft snow the birds could find no footing whence to spring out and so floundered about until frozen. Before the snow went off, however, sleet fell, and this, crusting the snow, undoubtedly saved many bird lives.—EARL STANNARD, *Brownsville, Oregon*.

Sterna caspia in Los Angeles County.—December 27, 1908, while rowing in Alamitos Bay, California, I counted eight individuals of *Sterna caspia* (Caspian Tern) resting on the exposed mud flats in company with Royal Terns, Western Gulls and numerous sandpipers. Altho *Sterna caspia* could hardly be compared with *Sterna maxima* by anyone at all familiar with either bird, to avoid possible mistakes I crossed the bay and flushed the entire flock, but did not attempt to secure specimens owing to the proximity of residences—C. B. LINTON, *Long Beach, California*.

A Correction.—I note that Mr. Robert Rockwell has, in his "Annotated List of the Birds of Mesa County, Colorado" (CONDOR, July, 1903, pp. 152-180), used, without permission, a record