

## PUBLICATIONS REVIEWED

THE BIRDS OF WASHINGTON | A Complete, Scientific and | Popular Account of the 372 Species of Birds | Found in the State | By | WILLIAM LEON DAWSON, A. M., B. D., of Seattle | Author of "The Birds of Ohio" | assisted by | JOHN HOOPER BOWLES, of Tacoma | Illustrated by more than 300 original half-tones of birds in life, nests, | eggs, and favorite haunts, from photographs by the | author and others. | Together with 40 drawings in the text and a series of | full-page color-plates. | By ALLAN BROOKS | ——— | Large Paper Edition | with photogravures and special photographs. | Sold only by subscription. | ——— | Volume I [-II] | ——— | Seattle | The Occidental Publishing Co. | 1909 | All rights reserved. — large 4to, vol. I: 5 ll., pp. i-xviii, 1-458, 3 ll.; vol. II: 5 ll., pp. i-vi, 459-996, 4 ll.; illustrations as indicated in title.

This long expected work reached us in August, a month of dullness to those who are compelled by circumstances to pass the season in the office, far from the refreshing mountains and forests. In our case, no more pleasurable, vivifying sensation ever pervaded us than when we had unpacked the two massive volumes and began to cut and turn the pages. The wonderfully clear scenic views, the accurate bird portraits, the vivid accounts, all tended to bring us thrillingly close to the realities depicted.

"The Birds of Washington" is the most impressively adorned bird book we have ever handled. From the fly-leaves, with their unique gull-pattern to Brooks' beautifully rendered Duck Hawk portrait, the work is an ideal of artistic taste and elegant book-making.

The text is chiefly popular in style, the technical matter being condensed into brief descriptions, and statements of range. A set of identification keys, prepared by Lynds Jones, is appended to Volume II. The numerous life histories are well told; many of them we recognize as the results of Bowles' careful field work. In fact a large part of the scientific value of the work was evidently contributed by this observer, as fully acknowledged by the author in the introduction.

The accounts of species are vivacious portrayals of their subjects, in the pleasing Dawsonian style. They are chuck full of clever allusion, from Bobby Burns to the Bible. As is clearly explained by the author the book is written to meet the approval of the majority of its readers. Probably 90 percent of the subscribers are very slightly or not at all familiar with previous ornithological literature. It looks a trifle out of place to announce the book as a "complete, scientific" as well as popular treatise, altho we recognize this as customary with publishers. The impression is satisfactorily corrected, however, by the author, who in

the preface shows his attitude to be one of commendable modesty.

The State of Washington is part of a region of wonderful zonal and faunal diversity and for the working out even of the rougher distribution of its birds, a vast amount more of field work will be necessary. While the author is clearly not in sympathy with unlimited collecting of specimens, he exhibits the proper attitude in his having overcome his qualms in many cases, by resorting to the gun to secure proper identification of species. We would suggest that with such birds as the Red-wings, Song Sparrows, Savanna Sparrows, and Jays, collecting in quantity will be necessary before their statuses are satisfactorily worked out. Such work as this (besides also the very large biographical phase of ornithology) awaits the activities of the Caurinus ("northwestern") Club, to which body of ornithologists the "Birds of Washington" is dedicated.

We feel that what we have tried to say in praise of Dawson's "Birds of Washington" is quite inadequate. There is within us a growing feeling of resentment, not towards the author, but towards the "fate" that lead Mr. Dawson to select Washington for his field of ornithological labors, rather than *California!* —J. G.

MR. LOVE HOLMES MILLER has recently named\* a new fossil bird from California under the title: PAVO CALIFORNICUS, A FOSSIL PEACOCK FROM THE QUARTERNARY ASPHALT BEDS OF RANCHO LA BREA. The locality is near Los Angeles where have also been found other interesting bird remains yet to be described. In association with these fossil birds have been unearthed such mammalian forms as the saber-tooth tiger, and a lion even larger than the present-day African lion. The new peacock is recognized from a tarso-metatarsus bearing a spur-core, as in males of the common domesticated peacock. The fossil material is minutely described by the author, and compared with its persisting allies.

"Students of Ornithology have in general laid minor stress on paleontological evidence in the determination of centers of distribution." This has been of necessity, for very little fossil material has been found representing existing bird groups. The discovery of a peacock, therefore, so far from the present native range of the family (the Indian Region) assumes a very large importance. Fossil peacocks have been found previously in Europe and India. Because of the still imperfectly disclosed record, Mr. Miller refrains from advancing any theories as to the course of dissemination of the group, or its place of origin.

As to the influences which have resulted in the disappearance of the phasianines from our fauna, while the quails are today so abundantly

\* Univ. Calif. Publ. Geology V, pp. 285-289, pl. 25; issued Aug. 14, 1909.