

ning. They would gulp the meat down just as fast as they could, when I cut it in small bits, and were able to tear the meat into shreds when in large pieces.

On the 9th of August I returned to the nesting site with the two captives in a basket. I liberated them at the edge of the thicket and they flew up and lit near the top of a small fir tree where they behaved for a time as though quite out of place. I remained quiet and soon heard a call from a young hawk on the other side of the thicket and was surprised soon after to see the mother bird fly to the tree where the two liberated hawks were perching. I had hardly expected to find the old and young still so near the nest. I was not able to remain at the nesting site any longer, and this was the last I saw of the hawks.

From the amount of feathers scattered over the ground in the thicket I am of the opinion that young birds formed the exclusive diet of this family of Sharpshins.

THE PEOPLE'S BREAD

A Critique of "Western Bird Guide"*

By WILLIAM LEON DAWSON

WE HAVE LONG needed an accurate color guide and manual, of convenient pocket size, to facilitate the recognition of our birds afield. Whether or not the "Western Bird Guide" is the book we have been looking for, it is the purpose of this paper to enquire. The dimensions of this little book are admirable— $\frac{1}{2} \times 3\frac{3}{8} \times 5\frac{3}{4}$ inches—just right to slip into the pocket and take along for an all-day hike. And when it is understood that the 255 pages of this book contain 231 cuts in color, representing nearly 500 species of Western birds, together with descriptive text, and that its price ranges from \$1.25 *down*, its importance as a formative element in the instruction of our Western youth is apparent. It becomes of the first interest, therefore, to ask whether it also answers the tests of scholarship, accuracy, and substantial worth.

We are not told anything as to the authorship of this little manual, but we may assume that it was conceived and partly sketched in by Chester A. Reed, and that his recent lamented death left the task to other and less experienced hands to finish. If this be the case, the book was brilliantly conceived but indifferently executed. Fortunately, it is not incumbent upon us to apportion praise or blame to individuals as such in this connection, but only to judge of the result, that which is offered to us in the name of ornithological bread.

The late Mr. Reed was one of comparatively few American bird painters who could catch the authentic character of the birds and hit it off in happy, confident fashion. While not of the first class, his work usually ranked high, and the contributions of his brush are what give this volume such value as it has. "C. A. R." drops out on page 114, and the plates immediately following cease to have any definitive value, descending at times to the level of caricature. Shades of Kit Carson! Is that a Roadrunner? But then, "H. F. H." never saw the bird, and he is doing the best he can. The Coppery-tailed Trogon and some others remind us of the souvenir series once put out by the "Arm and Hammer" brand of soda. The Woodpeckers are better, some of them quite decent in fact. Having gotten up speed again our aspirant takes a bad header over the Swift hurdle, and rising, bruised and angry, proceeds to slaughter the Hummers and Flycatchers.

* Western Bird Guide | Birds of the Rockies and West to the Pacific | Illustrated by Chester A. Reed, B.S. | Harry F. Harvey | R. I. Brasher | 1913 | Doubleday, Page & Co., Garden City, N. Y. Flexible leather, \$1.25.

A single plate by "C. C. T." (we should really like to know him) is like an oasis in the desert, because it does serve to recall to mind birds with which we are familiar. "R. I. B." 's work, reached in the Sparrows, restores in a measure our drooping spirits. His birds really look like birds, even though the color printer has played him some scurvy tricks, as witness his pale pink Crossbill, page 169.

The remainder of the book, filled (from page 172 on) with unsigned sketches, although we suspect some of the work to be "R. I. B." 's still, because of the sustained excellence of its drawing, goes all to pieces in its coloring. Thus, the Green-tailed Towhee is smeared all over the back and wings with a vivid grass-green, as is also the Violet-green Swallow (poor little innocent!). The color-mixer tired of his work or else had orders to hurry up the job, and the result is a sad mess. Somebody soused the Ouzel's head in a keg of brown paint (whoever drew that bird, page 218, as also the Catbird on the opposite page, has even Horsfall beaten). The Willow Thrush, page 235, fell into the lye vat and all his feathers bleached to a sickly yellow-brown; while the Robin and the Varied Thrush and the Bluebird have beautiful *vermilion* breasts, such as even the Cardinal might envy. By the way, what became of the black band on the Varied Thrush's breast? We have told a thousand people by word of mouth that the Varied Thrush was much like a Robin, except that he had a black crescent across the breast. Could we have been mistaken? Our "guide" declares we are.

And some of the earlier plates are not above criticism from the standpoint of accuracy in coloring. The Bonaparte Gull, page 26, boasts a combination of immature wings and nuptial head-dress. The Western Gull, on page 23, differs not a whit from the Herring Gull in the plate, although it is very different in fact. The Buffleheads, page 52, are way off color; the Black Turnstone, page 91, is shades too light; and the Glossy Ibis, page 63, far too red. It is the achieved excellence of many of the plates in point of coloring which leads us to attribute the poor work to carelessness rather than inability.

Usually the descriptive matter offered is placed directly opposite the figure upon the plate to which it appertains. Occasionally, however, transpositions have arisen, changes which must cause confusion to the inexperienced student. We should know, of course, that the Brown and the White Pelicans were transposed; but the change in the Scoters, page 56, will mislead the incautious student; while the confusion among the Auklets, page 15, baffles even honest inquiry. The Quails, page 95, will deceive all but the elect.

While it is obviously impossible in a work of this size to draw birds to a uniform scale, it might be expected that those, usually only two in number, upon the same plate, would be of the same scale. Yet this principle, commonly observed, is so often disregarded that it fastens upon the plastic minds of the young a vicious misapprehension which can never be quite shaken off. Thus, the difference in the size of the lesser Loons, page 12, is grossly exaggerated; the Western Solitary Sandpiper and the Western Willet, page 33, appear as twins; while the difference in the Curlews, really slight, save as it resides in the bills, is exaggerated one-half. Wilson and Mountain Plovers should be carefully distinguished in point of size; yet he who looks upon these in the "Guide" is confused forever after. Most offensive of all is the Swift plate, wherein Vaux's is made to appear *almost* as large as its great kinsman, the Black Swift. These things are unpardonable.

In taking up the consideration of the text, we find, speedily enough, that it is incoherent and inconsistent, ungrammatical even; that it is in fact, mere wadding. If this were all, we could forget it, and only wish that the spaces had

been left blank or turned to better purpose in the enlarging of the plates. But this is not all, for the text, formless and trifling as it is, is as full of inaccuracies, guesses, and bald misstatements as an egg is of meat—or, let us say, as an ownerless dog is of fleas; whoso lies down with it shall go scratching for many a day.

Of course the space at command is very scant. All the more reason, then, why some two or three lines of information should have been held to throughout. Apart from the oological interest, which predominates but is still intermittent, we get mere scraps—now a plumage description, now a range, now a bit of life-history, but always a choice array of Eastern guesses at Western facts. The omission of a bird's range is often misleading. Thus, Willow and Rock Ptarmigan are given as though they might be of universal distribution in the West.

The omission of a sub-species might easily be pardoned, if it were consistent; but to give one and make no mention of another more important in the West is needlessly misleading. Thus, no mention is made of the Hutchins Goose or the Sandhill Crane or the Oregon Ruffed Grouse or the Red-naped Sapsucker.

While professing to be complete, even species are omitted if they chance to resemble closely certain other species. Thus, the Lesser Yellowlegs, White-winged Dove, and Yellow-billed Magpie are omitted without mention.

An amusing attempt is made in these pages to "bear" the western egg market. Thus, we are told, page 114, that Condors' eggs are "not as unobtainable as many suppose"; that Duck Hawks nest "abundantly" on the Pacific Coast; also, that the Green-winged Teal breeds abundantly in California and Oregon.

But since we have made the charge of inaccuracy, let us be specific, for this is the nub of the matter. The inaccuracies noted appear to be of two classes: those which are due to sheer carelessness, *lapsi calami* and poor proof readings, and those which betray crass ignorance of Western conditions. The former are more easily forgivable, so let a few examples suffice. *Rallus levipes* is accorded a length of 10 inches as over against 15 for California Clapper Rail, page 15; Florida Gallinules are said to lay from six to ten eggs of a creamy buff color (no spots!) page 72; Coots, page 72, have the same retiring habits as Rails. (The writer had 246 Coots fighting for a chance at his loaf of bread this very day, yet there are two species of Rails which he has never yet seen.) *Ceryle torquata* is said to be "somewhat larger than the above", that is, than the Belted Kingfisher, although the accompanying numerals proclaim it to be only 8½ inches long, as against 13 for *Ceryle alcyon*. The Anna Hummer, the largest California species, page 142, is no longer than the Calliope, our smallest, etc., etc.

But it is only when we fully realize the difficulty which must beset the writer who would descant upon species two or three thousand miles away, above all to write a "guide" for them, that our appreciation of his courage rises to the boiling point. I give a dozen examples, selected at random from hundreds, to illustrate the difficulties which must inevitably attend such an attempt. We learn from this doughty volume that large numbers of California Murre eggs are taken yearly to the San Francisco and other market places, etc. Of course this practice was discontinued many years ago by Government order. The Glaucous-winged Gull is said to breed "from British Columbia northwards", page 22. Its breeding range includes the west coast of Washington also. Bonaparte Gulls "are rarely found in the U. S. with the black hood", page 26. They are of regular occurrence in such plumage both going and coming, as far south as Santa Barbara. Farallon Cormorants breed in large numbers on the Farallones, page 39. Presumably,—only they don't. Mallards feed on molluscs and marine insects which they gen-

erally reach by tipping, etc., page 44. Not conspicuously! The Fulvous Tree-duck is found "west to the Pacific Coast in southern California", page 61. The center of its abundance, however, is in central, not southern California. The white-faced Glossy Ibis "is occasionally found in southern California", page 63. Also to the number of some thousands in central California, northern California, and Oregon. Red Phalaropes are said to retain their winter plumage until after they leave us in the spring, page 73. They may be seen in the latitude of San Francisco in highest nuptial dress during the spring migrations. The Wandering Tattler is seen "building its nest along the marshy shores and banks of streams," page 84. Pure hypothesis! The Wilson Plover is said to be abundant on the coast of southern California, page 89. There is *one* record of its occurrence, accounted accidental. The Black Oystercatcher is credited "with no attempt at nest building," page 92. Its elaborate accumulations of transported pebbles, or rock flakes, are marvels of their kind, and I have known it to construct an elaborate nest of grasses, after the fashion of the gulls. The Bob-White is "fairly abundant in parts of California," page 93. The rearing of Bob-Whites is an admitted failure throughout California owing to the prevalence of foxes. The Prairie Falcon sometimes nests in trees. "Their nests are made of sticks lined with weeds and grass," page 113. This falcon never lays talon to twig in the Pacific Coast States, and the solitary instance of tree nesting cited by Goss is supposed to have been of a pair nesting in a *cavity* of a tree. Red-breasted Sapsucker, "a Pacific Coast bird from Lower California to Oregon", page 132. Its range also includes all of Washington and much of British Columbia. The Red-headed Woodpecker, page 134, "occurs fairly common in Arizona", whereas the A. O. U. Committee properly accounts it casual there. White-throated Swifts "congregate in thousands about the tops of inaccessible cliffs", page 140. A few scores at a time are all that most of us Westerners have ever seen. Is it possible that the author has the "Republican" (now the Progressive) Swallow in mind? Western Flycatcher—we are passing by much of the alleged information about western oology, for most of it is mere piffle anyhow; but how is this for the sole characterization of the nesting of the Western Flycatcher? "The nest is placed on the lower branches near the ground"! In view of this bird's well-known penchant for niches in cliffs and cubby holes of any kind, the description is scarcely adequate. California Jay, page 156, "the most common of the Jays on the Pacific Coast of * * * and Washington", whereas, in Washington it is of very limited occurrence along the north bank of the Columbia only. Large-billed Sparrows, page 178, "Their nesting habits and eggs are practically the same as those mentioned previously". This will be welcome news to most of our western oologists, who have been searching long and longingly for this to them unknown nest. Of course they *may* prove to be the same,—*quien sabe?* But the author of the "Guide" knows, for he says of the San Benito Sparrow just following, "Nesting habits are identical". Etc., etc., etc.

Perhaps the Critic will be accused of taking his task over-seriously, but he does feel that it is a serious matter. This gaudy, sloppy bauble will be the ornithological Bible of thousands. The plain people will feed upon it; and the people's bread is of infinitely greater importance than the pastry of princes. I have small time to discuss with you whether a slightly more ashen shade of "mummy brown" on the thirteenth scapular of a sparrow entitles its bearer to recognition as a subter-sub-species of *Melospiza melodia infinita*. If you say so we will let it go at that, and you may enter the ornithological Valhalla on that ticket, if you will; but when a bunch of book-making Yankees tells us that the Light-footed Rails are ten inch-

es long, and that Short-tailed Albatrosses breed on islands off the Coast of Alaska, and that the Western Savannah Sparrow is "a slightly paler form of the preceding" (said preceding being, according to the book, *Poocetes gramineus confinis*), and show us pale pink Crossbills and Jenny Wren Dippers and California Jays without any blue in their plumage, all in the name of daily bread, why, I say, it is time for censorship.

It is a poor compliment to our Western intelligence that this sort of slush is offered to our public, and offered too in the name of a reputable publisher, Doubleday, Page & Co., forsooth. Are we so provincial, are we so unsophisticated, are we so jejune that any old thing will go with us? Perhaps we do deserve our fate. The undiminished sales of a certain one volume flexible known as "The Birds of California" would seem to point that way. We would best munch our biscuit meekly and retire to our kennel to doze until such time as some one shall arise among us with wit enough and conscience enough and courage to prepare an *accurate* pocket guide to western birds. We have asked for bread and they have given us, if not a stone, at least a raw compound of meal and gravel.

A SECOND LIST OF THE BIRDS OF THE BERKELEY CAMPUS

By JOSEPH GRINNELL

Contribution from the University of California Museum of Vertebrate Zoology

ON JANUARY 28, 1911, the writer of the present paper published* a nominal list of the "Birds of the Berkeley Campus", together with a brief statement of the avifaunal conditions in the area under consideration.

For two reasons it has seemed advisable to publish a "Second List"†. First, because the early exhaustion of the 500-separate edition of the first list evidenced a local need for a folder of this sort, both in the University and in the public schools of Berkeley and Oakland; and second, because since the appearance of the 1911 list many additional species have been seen on the Campus and much detailed information has been gathered, not only by the writer himself, but also by several well-qualified observers, who kindly placed their notes at his disposal.

The University of California Campus, the area considered in this paper, comprises about 530 acres rising from an elevation of 200 feet at its western edge in the city of Berkeley to a height of 1300 feet at its eastern boundary near the crest of the Berkeley hills. Cutting down from these hills are several ravines or canyons. Heading in the larger of these ravines, Strawberry Creek courses in a general westerly direction through the whole length of the Campus.

Within its 530 acres the Campus furnishes shelter to birds of widely varying associational preferences. The hills from a distance look bare and untimbered save for interrupted tracts of newly-planted pine and eucalyptus. But these really well-grassed hill-slopes constitute a favored haunt of a distinct category of birds, of which the Meadowlark is a characteristic example. The chaparral, or brush, is of two distinct types: one, of which the commonest plant is a dark-foliaged, woody composite (*Baccharis*), is wide-spread on some of the upper slopes, and the other, consisting of snow-berry, hazel and brake, on north-facing and shaded slopes. In the upper part of Strawberry Creek basin are several clumps of madroñas, while

* Reprint from the University of California Chronicle, vol. XIII, no. 1, 4 pages (unnumbered).

† An edition of 1000 reprints of the present paper is issued.