

THE CONDOR

A Magazine of
Western Ornithology

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J. GRINNELL, Editor, Berkeley, California

HARRY S. SWARTH, Associate Editor

J. EVGENE LAW }
W. LEE CHAMBERS } Business Managers

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EDITORIAL NOTES AND NEWS

The proposition to expand the scope of THE CONDOR, as set forth in our last issue, aroused more interest than we had expected it to do. The straw vote has been responded to at a lively rate, and, as it stood on September 1, is two to one in favor of expansion. However, the tone of expression from the majority voters has been varyingly submissive, permissive or mildly approbatory, while that from the minority comes with vigor, rebuff and even threat of subsequent dire calamity! We had no notion of disrupting our present constituency, even if assured of increment membership to more than offset such defection. Therefore, though regretfully, we hasten to cover with our little scheme, and hereby declare that its consideration in relation to THE CONDOR will be given no further thought by the present Editor. So let our magazine continue on its feathered career unblemished with glint of fur or scales!

The day has come when the collector must take special pains to justify himself in the eyes of the increasingly many who are not inclined to countenance bird-destruction for any purpose whatsoever. Whatever the merits in this extreme attitude, collectors have the situation to face. Undoubtedly the "scientific specimen" argu-

ment is the strongest to be offered. In this connection it does look as though the collector might make more exhaustive use of the birds he kills. To save a well made skin, with accurate color notes, measurements, etc., is good. To save also the stomach, for economic record, is so much more use made of the bird. One long step still farther is to save the skeleton, or whatever portion of it remains when the skin is made up. And this need not now, with a knowledge of lately discovered methods, be the disagreeable, time-consuming task it once was. We would refer the collector to Mr. Holden's valuable article in the present issue, not only for an explanation of the simple processes involved, but for a statement of the urgent scientific need for preserving skeletons of birds.

PUBLICATIONS REVIEWED

THE BIRDS ON BUENA VISTA LAKE, SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA. By WM. SHORE BAILY. (*Bird Notes*, n s., v, Feb., 1914, pp. 51-57, 2 half-tone ill.; *id.*, Mar., 1914, pp. 79-83, 1 half-tone ill.)

The attention of the reviewer was called to the article here commented upon through Mr. Stone's exhaustive and valuable current index to "Recent Literature" in *The Auk* (vol. 31, July, 1914, p. 427). The reader infers with probable correctness that an English travelling sportsman is here relating some of his experiences abroad, and has dashed down his story with little or no regard for accuracy of form. Severe criticism is deserved on the score of nomenclature alone, for neither the author, nor the editor of *Bird Notes*, has apparently taken the least pains to secure correct determinations. The bird names employed almost throughout the article seem to be taken directly from European literature, just as if California birds had as yet secured no recognition in ornithology. Even so, there are inexcusable blunders in regard to relationships. The nature of the case will be understood from the following selections.

"As the sun rose, revealing my presence in the shadow of land, flocks of Gulls took wing, principally Herring, and Black-backed (identical with our English birds)"; "a few Black-winged Stilts (*Himantopus candidus*) allowed me to get very close"; "Moorhens, mostly in pairs, beat a leisurely retreat"; "a pair of Greenshanks were feeding on a near by mud-bank"; "Bronze Ibis"; "a large flock of small waders" . . . "proved to be Curlew-Sandpipers (*Tringa subarquata*), a little bird I had previously met with in the Isle of Man"; a "mixed flock of Curlew and Whimbrel" . . . included "the Eskimo species (*Numenius borealis*), but the Whimbrels were similar to our European birds"; "Harrier"; "Iceland Falcon"; etc. We are thus presented with about the sort of product a California tourist in Eng-