

mation on the food habits of California birds is given.

The economic work of Professor Beal came at a time when any esthetic or economic value that a bird might have was entirely overshadowed by depredations made more obvious by the conditions existing in a new country. His bulletins brought forward such conclusive evidence, however, as to convince most people that while birds sometimes inflict injury upon field crops and orchard trees and their products, they are often of great service in destroying enemies of the same crops, and that the aid so rendered in a subtle way may far more than offset the harm that is so apparent.

Mr. Beal's training was that of a scientist, for he was educated at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He was appointed Professor of Engineering at Iowa State College, later on becoming acting professor of zoology and comparative anatomy in the same institution. His interest in natural history finally led him in 1891, to join the staff of the United States Biological Survey. Throughout his connection with the Survey his interest was centered in economic ornithology. Twenty-five years of his life were therefore devoted to this branch of science, and most of the workers in the same field now with the Biological Survey received their training at his hands.

His many economic papers have clearly demonstrated the dollars and cents value of birds, and have greatly helped in building up the present-day sentiment favoring bird protection. The farmer, glad to receive help in distinguishing friend from foe, has been taught to seek conclusive proof of harm done before destroying any of the birds on his farm. To Professor Beal must be given also much of the credit for bringing the science of economic ornithology in America to its present high standard. In California he will be remembered as the pioneer and founder of economic ornithology, and as one who developed interest in, and protection for, insectivorous birds.

Mr. J. S. Hunter, who worked with Mr. Beal in the Pajaro Valley when investigations were being conducted in California, pays this tribute to him: "He was a man who did not seem to grow old, took an interest in everything, was thoroughly energetic and intensely interested in his work." With such characteristics it is little wonder that the name of Foster E. L. Beal is revered wherever known and that his publications are used as models by all younger workers.—H. C. BRYANT.

## COMMUNICATIONS

Editor of THE CONDOR:

Will you kindly allow me to make an appeal through your columns to the ornithologists of the Pacific coast for photographs for use in the Life Histories of North American Birds?

I am planning to have this work illustrated with a series of the finest photographs I can obtain, showing the home life of every species possible.

I therefore want photographs illustrating breeding colonies, nesting sites, nests and eggs, and young birds. I am short of material on Tufted Puffin, Rhinoceros and Cassin auklets, Xantus Murrelet and Pigeon Guillemot.

If any of your readers have good photographs illustrating the home life of any of the above, I should be glad to have them send me such as they are willing to contribute from which I can make selections. Each contributor will receive full credit for what photographs as are used.

Very truly yours,

A. C. BENT.

Taunton, Mass., October 10, 1916.

## PUBLICATIONS REVIEWED

RECENT ORNITHOLOGY FROM ALASKA AND EASTERN SIBERIA.—As a result of expeditions sent out from the United States into the far northwest, there have recently appeared several papers which add materially to our knowledge of the ornithology of the regions concerned. Three of these papers are to be commented upon here. The first, by Thayer and Bangs<sup>1</sup>, deals with the collections of birds obtained by Johan Koren along the Arctic coast of East Siberia, west to the Kolyma River. Koren was sent out at the expense of Mr. John E. Thayer, and during two years, 1911-12, evidently gave a good account of himself.

Thayer and Bangs describe several new birds from the Kolyma country, as follows: *Lagopus lagopus koreni*, a Willow Ptarmigan differing from our North American races in size and shape of bill; *Circus cyaneus cernuus*, a Marsh Hawk smaller and paler than the European Harrier; *Budytes flavus plexus*, a race of the Yellow Wagtail; *Otocorys alpestris euroa*, a race of Horned Lark. The Gray-cheeked Thrush (*Hylodichla aliciae aliciae*) was found to be nesting as far west in eastern Siberia as the

(1) *Notes on the Birds and Mammals of the Arctic Coast of East Siberia*. Birds, by JOHN E. THAYER and OTT RAM BANGS. Mammals, by GLOVER M. ALLEN. Proc. New England Zool. Club, v, April 9, 1914, pp. 1-66, 1 map.

Kolyma River. Incidentally an American race of the Black-bellied Plover is separated from the two forms occupying Europe and East Siberia, respectively, on the ground of small size. It is named *Squatarola squatarola cynosurae*, with type from Baillie Island, Arctic America. The validity of this race has lately been queried by Todd (Annals Carnegie Museum, x, 1916, p. 214). Thayer and Bangs find that, "like the knot, sanderling, turnstone and some other waders", the Dunlin divides into three races. These are: *Pelidna alpina alpina*, of western Europe; *P. a. sakhalina*, of east Siberia; and *P. a. pacifica*, of North America. The latter name, given by Coues years ago, is thus restored to use for our American bird. Koren was able to furnish field notes accompanying his specimens, and these provide basis for valuable facts in regard to migration times and nesting habits.

Another expedition financed by Mr. Thayer visited East Siberia and Arctic Alaska during 1913 and 1914. The two collectors of the party were Joseph Dixon and W. Sprague Brooks. The published report<sup>2</sup> is under the authorship of the latter, and acknowledgment for help is made to Outram Bangs and H. C. Oberholser. The notable features in this paper are the descriptions of several supposed new forms of American birds. *Larus thayeri* is named from Ellesmere Land. It is evidently a member of the very variable *Larus glaucescens* series. A far-reaching study of the gulls of Arctic America will be required before we can rest assured of the true status of all the variants. A western race of the Harlequin Duck, type from Kamchatka, is named *Histrionicus histrionicus pacificus*. Also the White-winged Scoter of the Pacific is separated from the Atlantic bird under the name *Oidemia deglandi dixonii*, type from Humphrey Point, Arctic Alaska. On geographic grounds this case is not exactly clear, for the species nests in the interior of North America, the Atlantic and Pacific seaboard constituting its wintering grounds.

A new race of Winter Wren is described from the Semidi Islands, Alaska, and is called *Nannus hiemalis semidiensis*. Also the Commander Island Rosy Finch is found separable from the Aleutian race and is called *Leucosticte griseonucha maxima*. Names employed for North American birds, and not used in the 1910 A. O. U. Check-List, are: *Lagopus lagopus albus*, *Squatarola squata-*

*rola cynosurae*, *Pelidna alpina pacifica*, *Planesticus migratorius caurinus*, and *Loxia curvirostra sitkensis*. Critical comment is often given concerning the status of forms. Then there is considerable amount of biographical material mostly of a very welcome nature. But the temporary loss of one of the field note-books prevented full use of the facts gathered by this expedition.

In the third paper<sup>3</sup> F. Seymour Hersey lists with annotations the birds encountered by him during the summer of 1914 in a trip along the coast of Alaska north as far as Point Barrow, with visits to the Siberian coast. This trip was undertaken under the patronage of A. C. Bent and with the chief object in view of securing material pertinent to the latter's work on the Life Histories of North American Birds. It is to be inferred that only a part of the total of information gathered is presented now.

Naturally, with so much territory covered in a single season, no single locality was explored with any degree of thoroughness; also many of the localities were such as had been visited repeatedly before and for which there are in the literature many bird records. We are led in this connection to criticise the paper on the score of the inconsequentiality of many of the remarks concerning the species. Actually new matter is small in proportion to the whole amount of print. In other words, the paper is "padded".

There is, too, an element of vagueness which is decidedly provoking to the student of distribution when searching for definite records of occurrence. The important find of a colony of *Sterna aleutica* was made; but where? Were specimens taken of *Larus vegae*? The references to *Larus occidentalis*, *L. californicus*, and *L. delawarensis* are more or less indicative of their having been found within Alaskan territory, but again there is lacking that clear-cut explicitness that would make these important records of most use to the serious student.—J. GRINNELL.

## MINUTES OF COOPER CLUB MEETINGS

### NORTHERN DIVISION

AUGUST.—The regular monthly meeting of the Northern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was held at the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, August 17, 1916, at 8 P. M. President Storer

(2) *Notes on Birds from East Siberia and Arctic Alaska*. By W. SPRAGUE BROOKS. Bull. Mus. Comp. Zool., LIX, September, 1915, pp. 361-413, 2 figs. in text.

(3) *A List of the Birds Observed in Alaska and North-eastern Siberia during the Summer of 1914*. By F. SEYMOUR HERSEY. Smiths. Misc. Coll., vol. 66, no. 2, 1916, pp. 1-33.