

A visit to the westerly range turned out to be a failure, because one of the roads crossing it at a point where there might be the proper sort of brush for my investigations was blocked and a great area in the region of Hood Mountain, which was one of my objective points accessible by road, had been recently swept clean by fire and there was no brush left to investigate.

As rain came on in the afternoon and my time was limited, I returned to San Francisco, at least satisfied that the winter range of the Yolla Bolly Fox Sparrow extends along the Mt. St. Helena Range as far south as it finds suitable cover, which is almost to Carquinez Straits.

It is rather remarkable that there are no records of the Yolla Bolly Fox Sparrow from east of the San Francisco Bay region, and none from south of it until Santa Barbara County is reached (Swarth, Revision of the Avian Genus *Passerella*, U. C. Publ. Zool., XXI, p. 166), in spite of a good deal of this country having been covered by well-known collectors in times past.—JOSEPH MAILLIARD, *California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco, March 5, 1924.*

Turkey Vultures Near Gridley, California, in Mid-Winter.—On the afternoon of January 13, 1924, I was out in a small boat on the Feather River in Butte County, California, with Mr. Gerald J. Chalmers, who resides on a ranch 3 or 4 miles south of East Gridley. We drew the boat up on a sand bar on the right bank of the river at a point about two miles south of East Gridley and stopped to look for a flock of Wood Ducks, which he had seen in that vicinity a few days before. To the south of us a short distance, four Turkey Vultures (*Cathartes aura septentrionalis*) were soaring over the river and not far away to the north three Western Red-tailed Hawks were flying together in circles. In a short while the vultures and hawks joined in one flock and continued for several minutes to circle about over our heads, flying just above the tree tops and about 150 feet away. This estimate of distance is a mere guess because it is very difficult to be at all accurate when looking straight up at a bird. The vultures were at any rate so near us that we could see them turning their heads as they examined the landscape. We could plainly see their white bills and (through field glasses) naked heads. This observation is of interest as showing a northward extension of the reported appearance of Turkey Vultures in mid-winter in the Sacramento Valley.—CLAUDE GIGNOUX, *Berkeley, California, January 28, 1924.*

EDITORIAL NOTES AND NEWS

THE CONDOR is not copyrighted. Anything and everything in it may be copied out and published elsewhere, with no legal bar to so doing whether or not permission has been obtained. A main purpose, we take it, of our magazine is service as a channel of record and dissemination of knowledge about birds. It is *expected* that worthy information appearing in THE CONDOR for the first time will *not* stay there forever, but will shortly be used by writers elsewhere—in monographic accounts and in books. At the same time there is a factor involved in the further published use of original materials that should be heeded—the ethical duty to make acknowledgment of original sources. This is customary and proper *until* such time as the portions of knowledge in question become so widely spread as to be considered *common* knowledge. There is no definite line here; but one's sense of propriety can

probably be relied upon to dictate when specific acknowledgment is or is not in order.

The English work entitled "A Practical Handbook of British Birds," which has been in course of publication by H. F. & G. Witherby (326 High Holborn, London) since March, 1919, is now completed. The whole work runs to over 1,500 pages of text, and gives no less than 350 text figures, besides 30 colored and monochrome plates. This was a co-operative undertaking, each of the several authors being responsible for information in his special field. These authors are: Dr. Ernst Hartert, Annie C. Jackson (Mrs. Meinertzhagen), Rev. F. C. R. Jourdain, Mr. C. Oldham, Mr. Norman F. Ticehurst, and Mr. H. F. Witherby, the latter acting also as editor of the whole work. As we stated in a former notice

(CONDOR, XXI, 1919, p. 174), this aggregation of authorities guarantees the general trustworthiness of the product. The finished work comprises the most authoritative technical treatise concerning British birds that we know of. We hope that in due course of time a work of the same well-ordered and comprehensive nature will be available for the western United States, if not for the whole of North America.

It is not an uncommon occurrence with any magazine for an imperfect copy to go out now and then—a copy in which there is a smeared or folded sheet, or some pages transposed, or even a signature omitted. In the case of THE CONDOR, the recipient of a defective copy should at once return it to our Business Manager, with request for replacement with a perfect copy. It should not be forgotten that complete, accurately collated sets of our magazine now possess a cash value far in excess of the original subscription price. Indeed, there has been a steady advance in market value as well as, we hope, in the scientific value of our series of publications. It is well worth the while of each Cooper Club member to watch out for this point—of seeing that his files are complete and contain only perfect numbers.

A new State list of birds for the West has just appeared, "The Birds of Oklahoma," under the joint authorship of Margaret Morse Nice and Leonard Blaine Nice (Univ. of Oklahoma Bulletin, new series, no. 20, May 15, 1924 [our copy received April 16, 1924!], pp. 4 + 122, 2 pls.). This contribution bears the stamp of good workmanship throughout, far better, for instance, than Oregon's first State list. This augurs well for the future rapid and secure development of Oklahoman ornithology. We note that of the 361 species, of formal entry in this list, specimens have been collected of 328. We heartily approve of Mr. and Mrs. Nice's standards for admission of species. They say: "Our policy in regard to sight records has been in the first place to admit to the state list on such authority only those birds whose occurrence would be confidently expected—i. e., that are regularly found in adjacent territory. Furthermore the acceptance of the report of each such probable bird has depended on three factors: the recognizability of the species in the field, the opportunity afforded for observation, and finally, the competence of the observer."

An increasingly felt need by teachers of ornithology in America has been for a suitable text-book in the general sub-



Fig. 40. ROBERT RIDGWAY (AT LEFT) AND CHARLES W. RICHMOND (AT RIGHT). PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN ON MR. RIDGWAY'S GROUNDS AT OLNEY, ILLINOIS, OCTOBER 22, 1922.

ject—not systematic, nor descriptive of species, but something dealing concisely in down-to-date fashion with flight, feather structure, molt, coloration, senses, behavior, voice, life cycle, instincts, ecology and distribution, etc. A very valuable series of ten lectures dealing with these topics has just been delivered by Dr. Glover M. Allen of the Boston Society of Natural History and published in an informal series of pamphlets entitled "An Introduction to the Study of Birds," under the auspices of the New England Bird Banding Association. Now, we are glad to hear, Dr. Allen is working over and expanding this series of lectures so as to constitute practically the general text-book of ornithology that is needed. This is to be published in the near future by the Marshall Jones Company of Boston. We have confidence that Dr. Allen, with his usual painstaking care, will produce a book of ideal reliability and usefulness.

PUBLICATIONS REVIEWED

DAWSON'S "BIRDS OF CALIFORNIA."*—At long last (14 years have elapsed since we sent in our subscriptions), and after many unforeseen vicissitudes, this prodigious undertaking has been successfully accomplished. It was the financial support of Miss Ellen B. Scripps, of San Diego, extended to the author at various times during the progress of the work, but in phenomenally liberal measure of very recent years, that made publication finally possible. On March 12, 1924, we received by express from Los Angeles our sets, complete. Our "edition" is the Book-lovers', in four volumes, and our particular copies are marked nos. 1 and 2. We understand that the text in all of the several editions is the same. The differences between the editions lie in the number of the more expensive type of plates and in

the kinds of paper, format and binding.

The total edition of the book will be large, a selling campaign will be vigorously pushed, and the work will thus be widely disseminated, among the general public as well as among those especially interested in birds. Covering, as it does, the whole field of Californian ornithology, it will, to a very great extent, be accepted by its readers as *the* authoritative source of information upon the birds of this state. That being the case, it is well, perhaps, to consider, as one aspect of the work, the effect it will have upon the rising generation of ornithologists (if such there be any longer!)—upon the youngster in his early teens who begins to take intelligent interest in the birds he sees about him, turning to books for information and accepting unquestioningly as verity everything that is printed.

First, to consider the illustrations: There can be no question as to the high rating of this feature of Dawson's work as compared with anything heretofore accomplished in this line. Dawson's "Birds of California" is in this outstanding respect scientifically valuable—it contains a marvelous wealth of pictorial studies of our bird-life. Practically every full species in the state is represented by three or more finely reproduced photographs, usually of typical environment, of nest, eggs or young, and of the bird itself. A great deal of potential informative value pertains to all of these—subject of course to the capacity of the user of the work to seek it out. The photographs of bird-life, by Dawson, Dickey, Finley, Pierce, and the rest of the contributors to this feature of the Birds of California, form an almost exhaustless storehouse of ornithological knowledge.

The Brooks drawings, both colored and uncolored, constitute a large element in the illustrative value of the work. Brooks' very best standards of ornithological portrayal are, to our minds, shown in his studies of the Scott Oriole, the Bufflehead, and the Black Oyster-catcher. Now and then we observe one of his bird portraits that impresses us less happily, for example, that of the Canyon Wren, which looks *huge* and which does not exhibit the pose commonly seen in that species.

All together, the photographs and drawings may be relied upon as perennial sources of appreciation for the well-informed, and as trustworthy moulders of impressions upon the beginner.

As to the text, most of it, too, may be praised unstintedly. Information is there

*The Birds of California | A Complete, Scientific and | Popular Account of the 580 Species and Sub-species of Birds | Found in the State | by | William Leon Dawson | of Santa Barbara | Director [etc., 2 lines] | — | Illustrated by 16 Photographures, 32 Full-page Duetone Plates and More Than | 1100 Half-tone Cuts of Birds in Life, Nests, Eggs, and Favorite Haunts, from Photographs | Chiefly by | Donald R. Dickey, Wright M. Pierce, Wm. L. Finley | and the Author | Together with 44 Drawings in the Text and a Series of | 48 Full-page Color Plates | Chiefly by | Major Allan Brooks | — | Book-lovers' Edition | Complete in Four Volumes [paged consecutively clear through] | Volume One [- Four] | — | South Moulton Company | San Diego, Los Angeles, San Francisco | 1923 | Sold Only by Subscription. All Rights Reserved. Small 4to, pp. xviii+2122 [total], illustrations as above.