

correct, then we will return again to the inclusive duck genus *Anas*, for *Mareca*, *Chaulelasmus* and *Nettion* as well as the Mallard group. This is a very desirable thing, in our mind. We have had altogether an unreasonable degree of generic splitting in the Anatidae, as well as in some other Families. Furthermore, *Falco* is, in Sclater's list, the inclusive genus for the Sparrow Hawks (in the American sense), the Pigeon Hawks and the Duck Hawks. Evidently the recent raising of *Cerchneis* from sub-generic to full generic rank, as was done by the A. O. U. Committee, was unwarrantable. We note that *Proctopus* is given as the genus name to include the Eared Grebes.

Mr. Sclater had a large contract on his hands in providing vernacular names for all the great array of included species. For the most part, we think he has followed a consistent system. But he has slipped up in some places, in dealing with a series of subspecies, by giving the first subspecies a group name and the subsequent subspecies the same name with modifying terms; thus, Hairy-breasted Toothbill, Nigerian Hairy-breasted Toothbill, etc. Of course, logically, all in the group are Hairy-breasted Toothbills and the first should have been given an additional modifying designation along with the rest. We note a number of names that strike us as a good deal better than those in common use in the A. O. U. Check-list, for example, Lily-trotter for *Jacana*. For the most part, geographical names are used for subspecies—which is, as a rule, a helpful custom. There are rather too many personal names among the vernaculars. To a foreigner, some of the vernacular names are meaningless, though perhaps unavoidably so; for example, Kivu Lourie and Aldabra Coucal. Many of the names are intriguing: Fernando Po Chocolate-backed Kingfisher, Angola Yellow-beaked Hornbill, Sahara Chanting Goshawk, etc.

In a few cases, vernaculars on the African list are the same as those long employed in other parts of the world for other species. For instance, Africa has a Black Oyster-catcher, but it is *Haematopus moquini*. Duplication of vernacular names ought to be avoided in a world series of check-lists.

Finally, while English and German systematists figure by all odds most importantly in the nomenclature of African birds, we find the names of several Amer-

ican systematists, appearing in about the following order of frequency: Cassin, Mearns, Oberholser, Ridgway, Chapin, Bangs, Stone, Elliot, and Chapman.—J. GRINNELL, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, University of California, Berkeley, June 19, 1924.*

HOWELL'S BIRDS OF ALABAMA.*—In this report 314 species and subspecies are listed, not a large "state list" as compared with certain western ones, but of decided interest nevertheless by reason of its being both thorough and authoritative. Furthermore, Alabama is representative of quite a group of South Atlantic States which have been relatively backward in their ornithological development. The present exposition is a straightforward digest of all that is known to date about the birds of Alabama—state records or local distribution, seasonal occurrence, general habits, and food habits—just the information that an enquiring resident of that state or an all-round student of North American birds would want at command.

Of special interest to the latter type of reader are the facts Mr. Howell records with respect to the change in status of species within historical times. As is the case in nearly every other state, most of this change is in the direction of depletion, even if, as is the case with a few species, actual extermination has not already come to pass. We were particularly interested in the accounts of the Swallow-tailed and Mississippi kites, Carolina Paroquet, Ivory-billed Woodpecker, and "Southeastern" Raven, all of which are now nearly or quite gone.

The nomenclature is outstandingly down-to-date, reflecting the activities of the priority sharp and genus splitter to the *n*th degree. It is too bad that unsettled cases have to figure in connection with practical, every-day treatises on birds, such as is the present. A saving grace is the fact that the equivalent names on the A. O. U. Check-list are given in footnotes, with, also, accurate citations to the published places where discussions of

* Birds of Alabama [by] Arthur H. Howell | Assistant Biologist, Bureau of Biological Survey, | United States Department of Agriculture | Issued in co-operation with the | United States Department of Agriculture | Bureau of Biological Survey | Edward W. Nelson, Chief of Bureau | by the | Department of Game and Fisheries of Alabama | I. T. Quinn, Commissioner [seal] | Brown Printing Company | State Printers and Binders | Montgomery, Ala. | 1924. Large 8vo, paper, 884 pp., 7 pls., 31 text figs. Our copy received May 21, 1924.

the various nomenclatural innovations are to be found. Much the better plan, however, would have been to employ the well-known A. O. U. names in the main headings and to give the ultra-modern renderings in the footnotes.

For a government publication the present book is printed on exceptionally good paper. Save for the few half-tone plates, the illustrations are printed on the same good text paper; and to accomplish this the figures were drawn in a style of coarse lines—with results that are rough upon close inspection, but which give a good distant effect in most cases. Indeed, figure 1, of the Least Bittern, and figure 17, of the Song Sparrow, both drawn by Robert J. Sim, possess high merit both ornithologically and artistically. Several of the illustrations numbered as figures are maps showing the ranges of near-related birds within the state.

The paper ends with a well-ordered Bibliography, of 107 titles, and an adequate Index. Beyond the first page of the Bibliography the right-hand page headings read "Biography"; but errors otherwise, anywhere in the volume, are exceedingly few, an indication of careful editing and good proofreading.

On the whole, Howell's *Birds of Alabama* takes forward position among the many state bird reports that have now appeared. Particularly commendable is the successful cooperation evidenced in the joint auspices of production, in the present case as between a federal bureau and a state department. It is to be hoped that other states, Texas, for example, will enter eventually into the same sort of effective arrangement.—J. GRINNELL, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, August 4, 1924.*

MINUTES OF COOPER CLUB MEETINGS

NORTHERN DIVISION

JUNE.—The regular monthly meeting of the Cooper Ornithological Club, Northern Division, was held at the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology on June 26, 1924, at 8 P. M. The meeting was called to order by President Dixon.

The following members were present: Misses Fisher, Hendren, Pringle and Van Gaasbeek; Mesdames Bamford, Bogle, Delpport, Grinnell, Harding, Holden, E. B. Mead, Calvert Meade and Schlesinger; Messrs. Clabaugh, Dixon, English, Grin-

nell, Mailliard, McKibben and Trost. Sixteen visitors attended the meeting.

Minutes of the May meeting were read and approved. Minutes of the Southern Division for May were read. Mr. Grinnell called the attention of the Club to the newly-issued Part I of the Check-list of the birds of the world. Mr. Joseph Mailliard reported upon some interesting observations made and records taken this spring in northeastern California, and soon to be published.

The speaker of the evening was Mr. Joseph Dixon, who told most entertainingly of the two months' eastern trip which he had just completed. His talk dealt with many contrasting aspects of eastern and western life. Two points stressed by him offer suggestions to the Cooper Club: namely, the number of outing meetings enjoyed by eastern bird clubs, and the stimulus offered to bird observation by the reports at meetings of occurrences of migrants and accidentals.

At the close of Mr. Dixon's talk, Miss Chatten of the staff of the State Fish and Game Commission brought to the attention of the Club the deplorable condition of the bird-life of Lower Klamath Lake, and suggested that since it has been proved that the draining of the lake has not been of any value in the agricultural development of the Klamath region the Club express itself as in favor of the reopening of the water gates at Ady and the refilling of the lake. Mr. Joseph Mailliard, seconded by Mr. English, made the following motion:

"It is hereby moved that the Cooper Ornithological Club, Northern Division, heartily endorse the movement to open the water gates at Ady and refill the Lower Klamath basin, thus restoring to thousands of birds their natural breeding grounds; and also that the Secretary be instructed to bring this motion to the attention of all persons whose influence may be invoked to help bring about the desired action." The motion was unanimously carried.

Mr. Clabaugh announced the circulation of a petition to the Legislature to prevent hydro-electric companies from so damming the Klamath River that salmon will be prevented from ascending to their spawning grounds. At the close of the meeting many members availed themselves of the opportunity to sign the petition. Adjourned.—HILDA W. GRINNELL, *Secretary.*