

gans); the Rock Grass Parrakeet (*Neophema petrophila*); the Blue-winged Grass Parrakeet (*Neophema venusta*); the Turquoise Parrakeet (*Neophema pulchella*) and the Splendid Grass Parrakeet (*Neophema splendida*).

The first four Neophemae are easily confused by anyone not familiar with the genus, and to avoid the production of crossbred birds of no scientific interest the following distinctions should be borne in mind. The Orange-bellied is the greenest of the four; it has, as its name implies, a patch of orange on the belly, but this feature is frequently met with in brightly colored adult males of *elegans*, *venusta* and *petrophila*, so it is of no value for purposes of distinction. The most noteworthy point of difference is in the frontal band, which is of a not particularly intense blue and is wide and rather indefinite in shape, recalling a female Turquoise. The Elegant Grass Parrakeet has a narrow frontal band of intense blue; the wing shows a narrow strip of blue of two distinct shades, pale turquoise at the edge, dark farther in. This bird is commonly confused with the Blue-winged Grass Parrakeet, and many of the latter are sold as Elegants.

The Rock Grass Parrakeet is the most soberly colored of the genus. The prevailing color is a brownish olive green, and the blue areas on forehead and wing are smaller and less vivid than in the case of *N. elegans*.

The Blue-winged Grass Parrakeet is the only member of the genus that occurs in Tasmania (Gould appears to be in error in supposing that the Orange-bellied is found there) and it is the one which is most often caught and offered by bird dealers. It may readily be distinguished from the true Elegant by the fact that the blue wing patch is nearly twice the width and is *all of the same dark shade*.

In conclusion may I suggest that the preservation of a rare and beautiful bird is a matter of importance to *all* true ornithologists whose interest in bird life goes deeper than the mere study of museum skins. Many persons who live in the colder parts of the States, or who have no facilities for keeping live birds, might surely be willing to offer financial help. Unless they receive outside aid, Californian aviculturalists may not be able to do all that is needed to save the threatened species from final extinction.

Yours truly,

TAVISTOCK,

Warblington House, Havant, Hants, May 5, 1926.

## PUBLICATIONS REVIEWED

THE LONE SWALLOWS, By HENRY WILLIAMSON. E. P. Dutton & Co., 681 Fifth Ave., New York, N. Y., 1926, 227 pp.

About a year ago Mr. Williamson published "Sun Brothers", a book exploiting all the romantic interest in nature, remaining at the same time intensely realistic. The present volume, "The Lone Swallows", is much in the same style and deals largely with the same *dramatis personae*, namely the falcons, the swallows, the wild flowers, and the people of southern England. The intermeshing of the threads of human, of animal, and of plant, destinies, is a favorite theme of the author, upon which he has made in the present instance a very readable book which should help in the struggle that seemingly must never cease if we are to preserve anything of natural beauty.

The ardency of a nature worshipper is evident throughout these chapters, and kindred spirits will thrill to many a telling phrase or convincing word picture in the book. In a few of the chapters the language is so loaded with metaphors that spontaneity is lost; but in general both writing and construction are good. Unusual words are fewer than in "Sun Brothers," and part of those employed are explained in the footnotes—an improvement. All in all, we like "The Lone Swallows" and wish its author continued power to write beautifully of Nature.—W. L. MCATEE, Washington, D. C., April 28, 1926.

TWO BOOKS FOR SERIOUS BIRD STUDENTS.—There come from England (H. F. & G. Witherby, London) two books, of scope and merit that lead us to recommend them to every serious student of bird life. One is Heilmann's "The Origin of Birds"; the other is A. Landsborough Thomson's "Problems of Bird-Migration". These two books possess certain qualities in common: each is the result of thorough-going, scholarly research; each gives a digest of the basic facts; each gives bibliographies of all the authoritative literature in the field of its subject matter; and each gives the final, down-to-date conclusions, theoretical and factual, in regard to the problems dealt with.

Gerhard Heilmann, a Dane, besides being a paleontologist of attainment, is an artist. In his book he depicts, in restoration, the remotest ancestors of the birds of today. We see *Archaeornis* and *Hesperornis* clothed with feathers, each amid its natural surroundings; we are given