

Black-and-white Warbler Again in San Diego County.—On December 24, 1925, while making a census of birds for submission to the magazine "Bird-Lore", Laurence M. Huey and the writer watched for some time a Black-and-white Warbler (*Mniotilta varia*) in a group of live oaks on the ranch of H. H. Weddle, Dehesa, San Diego County, California. The species has long been familiar to the writer, and was unmistakable. We believe this is the second record for San Diego County (see Condor, XXIV, 1922, p. 100) and may perhaps be worthy of publication.—CLINTON G. ABBOTT, *Natural History Museum, Balboa Park, San Diego, California, September 21, 1926.*

Pectoral Sandpiper in Washington in Spring.—On May 14, 1926, I watched for half an hour a Pectoral Sandpiper (*Pisobia maculata*) in an open grassy spot where water was standing, almost in the middle of the Indian village of La Push, Clallam County, Washington. The bird was so tame that I finally had to startle it to make it fly; in flight it uttered its characteristic "kreek". According to notes given me by Dr. Walter P. Taylor, there is only one previous record for the species in Washington in spring. The bird is not uncommon in the fall.—RALPH HOFFMANN, *Carpinteria, California, January 1, 1927.*

EDITORIAL NOTES AND NEWS

Plans for the Second Annual Meeting of the Cooper Ornithological Club, to be held this year in the San Francisco Bay region, April 29 to May 1, 1927, are maturing. A program of written papers, scientific and otherwise, is assured, and an exhibition of the large, elaborately illustrated and beautifully bound works on ornithology in the University of California Library is planned as one event of the meeting. There will be on display such sets as Gould's "Monograph of the Hummingbirds", Mathews' "Birds of Australia", Beebe's "Monograph of the Pheasants", Phillips' "Natural History of the Ducks", and many others of similar artistic, historical, and outstandingly ornithological interest. On one evening there will be a dinner and on another a general reception for Club members and visitors. The daily meetings will be open to the bird-loving public and members are urged to bring any friends who are interested.

The January, 1927, number of the "Standard Oil Bulletin" sets forth in an interesting fashion the various things that have been done to abate the danger of oil to ocean bird life. Nearly all of the oil companies have finally introduced methods which have in large measure done away with the pollution of navigable waters at sea as well as in certain places inland. This accomplishment, although not as yet perfectly realized, is the outcome of several years of effort, interviewing company officials and in other ways, by certain representative bird-lovers. To Dr. Barton W. Evermann and Mr. C. B. Lastreto,

representing officially the Cooper Ornithological Club as well as certain other scientific societies, the chief credit for this accomplishment should be given. These men gave abundantly of their time, energy and thought. This contribution of theirs, and of a few others of like aims associated with them, has probably resulted in the saving of the lives of many thousands of sea birds along our western coast.

The Birds of the Pacific Coast, by Ralph Hoffmann, with illustrations by Allan Brooks, will be published by the Houghton Mifflin Company late in March or early in April, 1927. The text will run to a little over 350 pages and will treat of about four hundred species which occur regularly in California, Oregon and Washington. There will be ten plates in color, figuring about fifty species, and over two hundred illustrations in black and white. The book is intended as a guide to field identification of birds. Mr. Hoffmann has made every effort to give from original observations fresh and helpful portraits of birds in their characteristic backgrounds. We have examined some of his "copy" and we prophesy a favorable reception for his contribution.

It seems that, in the January issue of THE CONDOR (p. 80), the Editor let a limpet get into print not only as a *bivalve* but also as a *crustacean*! It is, of course, the function of the Editor to catch just such blunders; and in this unfortunate instance he feels properly humbled.

By official action, the institution in Ottawa, Canada, long known as the Museum of the Geological Survey of Canada, or simply as "Victoria Memorial Museum", is now to be designated as the Canadian National Museum. This change, certainly for the better, indicates the true nature of the institution in question; for it constitutes a worthy parallel in function and importance to our own United States National Museum.

Our faith in the dependability of the *Literary Digest* has been severely shaken as a result of reading in its issue of August 7, 1926, an account of the California Condor. We had always supposed that this representative magazine took pains to make sure of the authenticity of the informational material presented in its various departments. But here we seem to have a hodgepodge of guess, near-fact and outright misstatement, in regard to a subject we do happen to know a little about. Here are some examples: The California Condor is "probably the largest flying bird in the world." The wing spread is nine "to twelve feet." It is "a direct descendant of the prehistoric super-condor, *Teratornis merriami*". "Once paired," it "remains mated for life". "If one of a pair dies, it is believed that the remaining bird never takes another mate." "Condors are believed to live to the age of 100 years." "According to stories told by early residents of California, the Condor was monarch of the air, easily able to whip a golden, or even a bald, eagle." "Extinction of the California condor . . . is due largely to the desire of the miners in the days of the gold rush . . . for the large and hollow quills in which to carry gold dust."

The above statements are cited, without any cautionary comment, from clearly uncritical sources. What do readers of *The Condor* think of them? While the article in question contains a plea for the protection of the California Condor, it is headed with the insidiously suggestive caption, "A Bird that Lays \$1,500 Eggs". But, naively, we are told that "collectors for museums nearly completed the job of extermination before the State of California took a hand and protected the birds and their eggs with heavy penalties."

Seriously, there is a worthy piece of work pressing for attention before it is too late, namely, the writing of a true and exhaustive natural history of the California Condor.

PUBLICATIONS REVIEWED

CHECKLIST OF THE BIRDS OF AUSTRALIA. —With our own Check-list of North American Birds in course of preparation, this newly published Checklist of the birds of Australia* will naturally be scrutinized eagerly by American ornithologists. The scope of the two works is essentially the same, to the extent that each aims to give a reliable list of the birds of a given area, but manner of treatment differs rather widely.

The Australian Checklist gives the following information: (1) The consecutive number of the species. (2) The accepted generic name (with the subgeneric name in parentheses). (3) The specific name. (4) The vernacular name. (5) The consecutive numbers of the species in the first edition of the Official Checklist, in parentheses. (6) The number of the colored plate in Gould's *Birds of Australia*. (7) The species number in Gould's *Handbook to the Birds of Australia*. (8) The number of the plate in Mathews' *Birds of Australia*. (9) The range of each bird in Australia and beyond, in abbreviated form. (10) The original reference of the accepted specific name. (11) The various names used in Australian works, given in chronological order.

As regards the last (11), "no opinion whatever is expressed as to the validity or otherwise of the many subspecific names proposed", but we wish there had been. Undoubted synonyms are mixed with the names of races whose authenticity is equally undoubted, to the everlasting bewilderment of a reader who, like the reviewer, has but a casual knowledge of the region covered.

As is pointed out in the introduction, every item is condensed to the utmost. With abbreviations for nearly every term used, general, bibliographical, or geographical, with small-sized type and close-set lines, a great mass of information is condensed within a very few pages. As compared with our own Check-list (1910 edition), of about the same sized page, our volume treats of 768 species in 374 pages, the Australian list, of 707 species in 115 pages. The extremely condensed

* The official checklist of the birds of Australia. Compiled by a Committee of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists' Union. Second and revised edition with appendix: scientific names—notes and pronunciation. By H. Wostenholme, B. A., M. B. O. U., R. A. O. U. Wahroonga, Sydney. Published by the Royal Australasian Ornithologists' Union, 1926. 212 pages, 1 plate (map). (Copies available from the R. A. O. U. at 12 s. 6d.)