

EDITORIAL NOTES AND NEWS

The fifth Annual Meeting of the Cooper Ornithological Club will be held in Los Angeles and vicinity on April 11, 12 and 13, 1930. Sessions for the presentation of scientific papers will be held on Friday, April 11, and Saturday, April 12. The meeting of the Board of Governors will be held on April 13. Chairman Miller has appointed the following committee to arrange for the meetings: W. Lee Chambers, finance; Donald R. Dickey, hospitality and general conclaves; Harry Harris, publicity and correspondence; L. H. Miller, scientific program; George Willett, meeting arrangements.

The Mailliard Prize of One Hundred Dollars, offered for the best article on western birds to be submitted during 1929 for publication in *The Condor* was won by Mr. J. M. Edson, of Bellingham, Washington. His article, entitled "Recession in Weight of Nestling Birds," will appear in our May issue. It was chosen from among fifteen articles which were selected out of many more as meeting the conditions of the competition (see *Condor*, 31, 1929, pp. 40-41). It will be recalled that it was the intention of the donor of the Prize, Mr. Joseph Mailliard, Honorary Member of the Cooper Ornithological Club, thus to encourage persons who do not have ready access to large libraries or to extensive collections of specimens, to make independent studies of living birds.

The biennial membership roster of the Cooper Ornithological Club will appear in the May issue of *The Condor*, to go to press about April 15. Please send to the Editor promptly any changes of address or other pertinent information, so that we may have this roster as accurate a record as possible.

Mr. Alex Walker, one of Oregon's most active ornithologists during the past several years, has recently been appointed field collector for the Cleveland Museum of Natural History. He will carry on active field work in Oregon and adjacent states for the next several months. Mr. Walker joins the Cleveland institution well qualified for his duties as bird collector, having had ample experience over a number of years in building up a representative bird collection of his own.—S.G.J.

The September, 1929, issue of *The Wilson Bulletin* contains an article of extraordinary excellence. This is a thoroughgoing study of the Harris Sparrow, presented by Professor Myron H. Swenk and Mr. O. A. Stevens as the result, obviously, of a very great amount of study. Ten years previously, the early history of this sparrow, and its local behavior in the Kansas City region, had been given quite fully by Mr. Harry Harris in the *Auk*. The present contribution gives an exhaustive account of the entire distribution of the species, based on an amazing number of records. These plotted on a map show an exceedingly limited breeding area, almost as small wintering range, but very wide latitude of occurrence in seasons of migration and as straggling vagrants. The natural history of the species is also dealt with at length. This paper might well serve as a pattern for future similar studies of individual species of birds.—J.G.

With No. 1 of its Vol. xi, January, 1930, *The Murrelet* changes from a mimeographed style of publication to the more formal, bibliographically recognizable, printed style. Its general appearance in its new style is pleasing, and the articles in the present number are of good standard. Some of the authors represented are Stanton Warburton, Jr., Allan Brooks, L. B. Bishop, E. A. Kitchin, J. M. Edson, Kenneth Racey, and D. E. Brown. *The Murrelet* is published tri-annually by the Pacific Northwest Bird and Mammal Society, and it is edited by F. S. Hall, with J. Hooper Bowles serving as associate editor.—J.G.

Part II of W. L. Scater's "Systema Avium Æthiopicarum" is out (our copy received February 3, 1930). This is the concluding part of the African portion of the projected systematic list of the birds of the world. The new, fourth edition of the A. O. U. Check-list now in preparation fits in as another portion of this world list. We have already reviewed at length Part I of Scater's contribution (see *Condor*, 26, 1924, pp. 204-205). Part II follows the same standards, as far as we can see, in all respects. It is paged continuously with Part I, and

the total pagination is now xii + iv + 922. According to the statistical summary, the total number of forms (sub-species) ascribed by Sclater to the Ethiopian Region, as he limits it, is 4439. This list of African birds is published by Taylor and Francis, London; price 21s per part.—J.G.

"A Systematic Classification for the Birds of the World," by Alexander Wetmore (Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., 76, January 8, 1930, pp. 1-8), reached us just at the critical time when it could be put to immediate practical use. Accepting it as the latest and most authoritative word as to the constitution and sequence of the higher groups down to families, and likely to hold with a fair degree of permanence for many years, we are using it as our guide in installing the 50,000-odd birds contained in the California Museum of Vertebrate Zoology in our new quarters in the Life Sciences Building, University of California. This sequence is, of course, also that followed in the new, fourth edition of the A. O. U. Check-list. Doubtless other museums will in due course also rearrange their collections to accord with this system.—J.G.

PUBLICATIONS REVIEWED

MCATEE ON NATURALIZING GAME BIRDS. Since the native game supply has been shot off almost, or in many places quite, to the vanishing point, sportsmen demand that the supply be recouped. The method of recoupment sportsmen see and insist upon is the bringing in and planting of exotic species. Granting this demand from the sportsmen, which evidently *must be met* no matter how unwisely or thoughtlessly grounded, it becomes the duty of the United States Department of Agriculture to offer advice, as sound as possible under the condition imposed.

To this end Mr. W. L. McAtee, of the Survey staff, has drawn up a list of "Game Birds Suitable for Naturalizing in the United States", and this selected list of species, together with well-considered general comments, has been issued as Circular No. 96, United States Department of Agriculture (November, 1929, 24 pp., 14 figs.).

Critical perusal of this circular convinces the present reader that it has been written studiously to harmonize with the special notions of the shooter, of the fish

and game administrator, and of the commercial game breeder—those who, for various reasons, urge the introduction of non-native game species. It seems to us plain that Mr. McAtee all through this report adroitly avoids commitment to any positive statement of his own with regard to the basic desirability of attempting to introduce alien species at all. Apparently granting, then, that it is desirable to do so, he proceeds to meet, as best he can by careful marshalling of facts and words, the arguments that recently have been advanced elsewhere against the introduction of non-native species. We think his reasoning on nearly every point is eminently "logical" (to use a word that he himself employs in the course of his discussion)—save in one quite crucial factor, that involving the idea of sufficiency of food supply for native *plus* introduced gallinaceous species. He says, "The food supply for game birds can be increased almost indefinitely, however, if the effort be made" (an unassailable statement, with the "if"). But: "No introduction should be considered without prior attention to the food supply, and effectively increasing it if necessary"—another wise statement which, taken fundamentally, as it should be taken, negates the entire question of the propriety of attempting to plant additional species in a region already possessing closely related native species.

Toward insuring the "success" of plantings of foreign game birds, down-to-date recommendations are made by Mr. McAtee in regard to the importance of minutely studying habitats. The conditions which obtain in the territory to be stocked must be thoroughly known, as also the environmental factors under which the candidate for transplantation naturally lives. The discussion under this head is worthy of the closest heed by fish and game administrators. But we doubt not that despite this, the present method of haphazard, trial-and-error introduction, which prevails, for instance, to the nth degree here in California, will go on far into the future. In this connection Mr. McAtee presents climatological and vegetational maps of the United States, which must prove instructive to sportsmen who are wont to urge introduction of game species from almost any part of the world into almost any part of our own extremely variable country. Such maps, while in the large adequately significant, are, however, mis-