

species covering the following orders: Struthioniformes, Rheiformes, Casuariiformes, Apterygiformes, Tinamiformes, Sphenisciformes, Gaviiformes, Colymbiformes, Procellariiformes, Pelecaniformes, Ciconiiformes, Anseriformes, and Falconiformes. The only recent attempt to list most of the species in these groups was that made in the first volume of Sharpe's "Hand-list", published in 1899 and consequently now thirty-two years old and out of date. It is expected that at least ten volumes will be required to complete the work. The second volume is in active preparation by Mr. Peters and preliminary work on others is under way. Subscriptions are now invited and may be addressed to the Harvard University Press, Randall Hall, Divinity Avenue, Cambridge, Massachusetts. Price, five dollars per volume.

The Salton Sea Wild Life Refuge has been set aside by Executive order (dated November 25, 1930) as "a refuge and breeding ground for migratory birds." The area includes government lands in the southern basin of the Salton Sea, Imperial County, California, and it will be administered by the Biological Survey of the United States Department of Agriculture. "It will be unlawful to hunt within the area, or to trap, disturb, or kill any wild animal or bird of any kind; to take or destroy the eggs of any wild birds; [etc.]" We understand, further, that a move is now under way to make Death Valley, Inyo County, a National Park, to be administered under the same system as Yosemite, Sequoia and other National Parks. All of which is in the right direction in the interests of wild animal conservation and betokens success on the part of persons and agencies who are working quietly but effectively toward the realization of high ideals.

PUBLICATIONS REVIEWED

NOTES ON A COLLECTION OF BIRDS FROM ARIZONA AND NEW MEXICO, by Harry C. Oberholser. (Scientific Publications of the Cleveland Museum of Natural History, vol. 1, no. 4, December 31, 1930, pp. 83-124, pl. [colored] XVIII.)

In years past Dr. Oberholser has produced a series of systematic treatises upon various groups of birds which have been rightly regarded as among the highest in that type of study and which serve

today as bases for any further investigation in the genera and species concerned. I, myself, have so habitually consulted his papers whenever they touched upon my own work that it was with the liveliest interest and anticipation that I opened the present "Notes" upon the birds of a region with which I am thoroughly familiar. And, most regretfully be it said, the paper was laid down with a feeling of sadness and disappointment—surely we have a right to expect more from the studies of one of our leading systematists. This annotated list might have been acceptable forty years ago as a report from virgin territory, but at the present time and from the regions covered it is a futile piece of work. Only as the product of an acknowledged authority is it deserving of attention.

In the introduction it is said that the Huachuca Mountains are "the classic collecting ground of Arizona," a phrase better applied to the Santa Catalina range; but nowhere in the paper is there the slightest recognition of other peoples' labors. The author's whole concern is with certain assemblages of specimens, which either are or are not representative of "good subspecies" and which file before him in hasty array to receive sweeping and final judgment as they pass. There are many statements throughout the paper that may be cheerfully accepted, yes—but these, too, are generally exasperating; for, like the Katydid, "Thou sayest undisputed things in such a solemn way!" It is needless to go into detailed criticism, of the stately approval of long-settled questions; of the kaleidoscopic shifting of names which must inevitably remain in the debatable class and eventually be applied according to some accepted compromise and not by condescending assertion; or of the arbitrary "rearrangement" of difficult groups here so lightly and impossibly re-classified.

My feelings are these: That in our North American avifauna we have pretty nearly enough names to go with any remarks we wish to make; that, of greater importance, there are underlying facts and deductions for the statement of which names should act as the vehicle, which are deserving of close study and which are assuredly of enthralling interest. Arizona in the past has been a rich field for such studies and it is childish to put forth a brief but formal and authoritative-appearing synoptic paper that ignores and

contradicts the work of men who have lived and labored with these problems for months or years.—H. S. SWARTH.

THE WOODPECKERS OF OKLAHOMA.¹—In this forty-seven page pamphlet Professor Crabb has given, not only to the specialist in ornithology but also to the beginning student of birds, a condensed and rather complete account of sixteen species and subspecies of woodpeckers which he assigns to the state of Oklahoma. In the beginning he gives a brief account of the economic importance of the group. Here he considers all except members of the genus *Sphyrapicus* as being beneficial. All of the species of *Sphyrapicus*, he says, are more or less detrimental; then he adds a qualifying statement (p. 111) in which he says that the damage they do is more apparent than the good they do, thereby not really committing himself.

The author's discussion of the economic importance of the woodpeckers is followed by a brief statement of the characters of the family and an explanation of how to take the various measurements employed with study skins, certainly an aid to the beginner who is trying to identify birds. Next comes a general account of each species, in which he followed a uniform method of treatment throughout. The following order is employed: scientific name; common name, with A. O. U. number; range of species; description of call notes in many instances; measurements; detailed description of plumage of adult male and female, and of young; and a discussion of the habits of the birds. For data on food habits he draws freely upon information from other sources than his field notes, especially from Beal. However, much of his information on the habits of the birds he has gathered from personal observations made in the field. At the end of the paper is a list of twenty-five titles cited in the text.

Considering the paucity of comparative material available to him for the systematic treatment, and the fact that his earlier notes were destroyed by fire, I think that Professor Crabb is to be commended for this work. A few more illustrations possibly would have made it of more service to the teacher and to the student of birds in Oklahoma.

Unfortunately there are usually a few

typographical as well as other errors in any publication. The most serious of these in the present paper is to be found on page 114 where the author attributes 100 genera of woodpeckers to North America. Also plate 1, in which he figures the hyoid and tongue arrangement in *Colaptes*, *Dryobates*, and *Melanerpes*, is inverted. The latter error is very probably the fault of the publishers. But, after all, we should not discount the real value of an important contribution because of a few minor errors that happened to creep in.—W. H. BURT.

MINUTES OF COOPER CLUB MEETINGS

SOUTHERN DIVISION

DECEMBER.—The December meeting of the Southern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was held on Tuesday evening, December 30, 1930, at the Los Angeles Museum, Exposition Park, Los Angeles. About sixty members were present and President Willett was in the chair. The minutes of the November meeting of the Southern Division were read and approved and extracts from the minutes of the November meeting of the Northern Division were read.

The following applications for membership were read: Mrs. Robert C. Hill, Desert Sanatorium, Tucson, Arizona; Dr. Oliver L. Austin, Tuckahoe, Westchester County, N. Y.; Lony B. Strabala, Leetonia, O.; Arthur Goldfrank, 350 N. Stanley Ave., Hollywood, Calif., all proposed by W. Lee Chambers; and Pearl E. Post, Prescott, Ariz., proposed by Edward C. Jacot.

President Willett called on Mr. and Mrs. Clary to report on the progress being made toward the establishment of a game refuge on Salton Sea. Mr. Clary stated that they had not been able to learn much more than has been reported in the newspapers. He is not sure that a game refuge will do much to protect the game birds because of the tactics being practiced by the gun clubs there. If the ducks are not on the gun club grounds, so they can be shot, an airplane is sent out to find them and scare them up so they will fly to the gun club grounds. President Willett said he hopes the game refuge will be established so that it will protect the colonies of White Pelicans and other birds nesting on the islands in Salton Sea.

The Chair appointed as a nominating

¹The Woodpeckers of Oklahoma, by Edward Drane Crabb. Publ. Univ. Okla., Biol. Survey, vol. 2, 1930, no. 3, pp. 111-158, 4 pls.