

excavation at Workman and Alhambra streets, Los Angeles, in 1933. The specimens, a distal end of tibiotarsus and complete pedal phalanx, both petrified, may be assignable to *Parapavo*, but unfortunately they do not possess any diagnostic generic characters by which to make definite identification. For this reason they have been heretofore unrecorded.

The only other fossil meleagrids which have been recorded from California are from the Pleistocene of Potter Creek Cave and of Mission San José. Eight specimens from the former locality were originally recorded as *Meleagris* sp., though later Miller, Carnegie Inst. Wash., Publ. 349, 1925, p. 67) indicated that they were "referable either to *Parapavo* or to *Meleagris*." The fragment of sternum from the Mission San José locality is the type specimen of *Meleagris richmondi* Shufeldt.—HILDEGARDE HOWARD, *Los Angeles Museum, Los Angeles, California, July 14, 1936*.

Pasadena Screech Owl and Desert Sparrow Hawk in the Same Nest.—A most interesting set of eggs was found on the Mohave Desert north of the San Bernardino Mountains on May 5, 1935. I discovered a bird about eight inches down from an opening which was five feet up in the trunk of a Joshua tree. It was not a surprise to remove a Pasadena Screech Owl (*Otus asio quercinus*), but it certainly was one to feel the bottom of the cavity well filled with eggs.

The first egg removed was brown instead of white and I began to suspect the reason for the large set. The nest proved to hold four each of the owl and Desert Sparrow Hawk (*Falco sparverius phalaena*), all of which were normal for size, shape, and color. The two kinds of eggs all lay on the old wood at the bottom of the hole and were well intermingled. Those of the owl showed slight incubation while those of the hawk seemed to be slightly addled. Thus the evidence indicates that the owl took possession of the nesting site before the hawk had started to incubate her set of eggs.—WILSON C. HANNA, *Colton, California, August 26, 1936*.

Opinions Aroused by Pettingill's Monograph on the American Woodcock.—One by one and at an accelerated rate our North American birds are being studied for the purpose of writing exhaustive accounts of their lives. On April 30, 1936, the Boston Society of Natural History published as volume 9, number 2, of its memoirs the final report based on a five year study of the American Woodcock by O. S. Pettingill, Jr. The volume contains 223 pages and 10 plates; it sells for \$3.50 in paper covers.

Dr. Pettingill's patient industry in preparing this book will be appreciated by those bird students of the future who will have to come to it for an acquaintance with this reclusive bird, especially if the whims of civilization completely exterminate it. He has made a better than average report upon a difficult topic. It is obvious, even from casual examination, that the aim primarily was to provide an instructive book, not one that would be merely pleasing to the reader. It is fair, then, to consider the work as a pattern for other serious studies of single species and to see if any improvements in method be desirable. Persons intending to prepare monographs on single species can learn much by thus analyzing the reports already in print. In the following paragraphs are indicated several opinions on the preparation of a report on the life of a given bird, along with examples, from Pettingill, which do not agree with them. According to these opinions a writer should observe especially the following rules:

Discard any part of an original outline for which materials do not become available.

"Defense of Nesting Territory" (p. 287) is discussed without any supporting evidence. The third major division of the book, "The Struggle for Existence", is so far below the standard of the rest as to indicate that it should have been eliminated and the usable facts placed in other sections.

Give full details where required for clear indication of significance.

Usefulness of the list of vernacular names (pp. 187-188) would be enhanced if we knew something about each one—the time, place, and frequency of application. Surely the most important parts of such a list would be citations to authorities.

Base general statements on evidence presented, not on some generally accepted theory or supposition.

It is demonstrated (p. 278) that woodcock sometimes "travel at a low level", but where is the evidence that they "generally" do? Uncertainty in treatment of the topic "Breeding Territory" is indicated (p. 280) first by declaring that the "rule" implied in the concept is in the woodcock "subject to great variation," and second by defining, in the first three paragraphs, five separate kinds of territory—breeding territory, wooded territory, open-country territory, diurnal territory, and nesting territory. Considerable influence of a traditional theory of territory is shown. Is there evidence (p. 305) that polygamy actually occurs in this bird? The explanation of injury feigning (p. 332) seems not to follow the evidence or even to agree with it. There is probably

as much volition involved here as in the mating flight or any other type of motion. It may be doubted that the bird consciously plans any of its activities. The discussion of migration (p. 277) seems to say that migration in the woodcock results from influence of the gonads and is controlled by weather conditions, but surely this is not the correct interpretation of the "recently advanced theories" alluded to.

Condense such items as those dealing with occurrence.

The forty-five pages of material on distribution and abundance could easily have been tabulated in much smaller space. The half page devoted to California could be replaced with the statement that there is no satisfactory record of the species for this state. Ten degrees of abundance require too fine discernments to be appreciated by the reader; anyway it is doubtful if the information justifies more than five such adjectives.

Verify the spellings of names of persons.

Names like Hoffmann, Oldys, Ridgway, Saunders, and Seebohm (each misspelled) can be found with very little search.

Make the printed report compact.

A book more than nine inches wide and twelve inches high is too cumbersome for ready handling in reading or storing; not many book shelves will accommodate it. The wide type bed ($6\frac{3}{8}$ inches) makes reading tiresome and wastes paper where short lines occur, as in tables and in the bibliography. The colored plate could have gone in a seven-inch book without reduction.

Place photographs with the text.

The increased value of illustrations near the discussion rather than collected in plates at the end of the volume is surely worth the possible greater cost. Also, it more than balances the loss of detail which may result if they are printed on text paper.

Use terms in their generally accepted meanings, or else define them.

It is misleading to describe bill, eye, and feet under "fleshy parts" (p. 188). In the diagram and discussion of flight song the term vertically is used in a sense opposite its usual meaning. The reader is likely to wonder what is meant by "level apex" (p. 288). It is not quite clear what is meant by the term "successful species" (p. 245). Can any species exist at all that is not successful according to the definition given?

Make the summary an abstract rather than a list of contents.

A large number of important facts could be recounted within the two pages devoted to a bare listing of the topics treated.—JEAN M. LINSDALE, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, University of California, Berkeley, August 7, 1936.*

NOTES AND NEWS

With completion of its fortieth volume, an event now but two years in the future, the issue of a fourth 10-year index to *The Condor* will be in order. The preparation of such a decennial index requires the services of a person who knows current ornithology, who understands avian nomenclature and synonymy as pertaining to the period in question, and who gets personal pleasure out of accurately organizing a great mass of detail. The first 10-year index, issued in 1909, was the work of the late Henry B. Kaeding; the second 10-year index, issued in 1919, was the work of John R. Pemberton; the third 10-year index, issued in 1931, was the work of George Willett. What Cooper Club member, who feels qualified to do the fourth 10-year index, and who really wants to do the job, will undertake this service to the Club and to our science? It is none too soon for someone to announce himself and to begin work; for the manuscript should be com-

pleted, all ready for the printer, early in 1939.—
J. G.

Circumstances again force us to announce a certain editorial policy in connection with *The Condor*, namely, that of curtailing the function of reviewing current literature. This function is one that we would like to exercise, but we simply cannot, consistently, for lack of space. We feel that all the Cooper Club's available resources should be conserved for printing in our magazine as many as possible out of the large offering of original manuscripts. The best we are able to do in the reviewing line is to give brief notice, under "Notes and News", of an occasional publication that seems to have special bearing on western ornithology—or otherwise, merely as the spirit moves. Be it known, then, that the editors of *The Condor* do not want books or publications sent them with any expectation that these will