

NOTES AND NEWS

The Index to Volume XXXIX of the *Condor*, which concludes the present issue, is the work of Miss Selma Werner. To her the editors hereby express their gratitude for this essential service well performed. Again, we may properly remind ourselves that the publication function of the Cooper Ornithological Club is one that is maintained through abiding interest and sacrifice of time on the part of a considerable number of the Club's members, not just a very few.—J. G.

Frank Stephens, pioneer naturalist and Honorary Member of the Cooper Ornithological Club, died at San Diego on October 5, 1937. He was born in Livingston County, New York, April 2, 1849, hence had passed his 88th birthday; he came to California in 1876; had been a Cooper Club member since 1894. In 1918 (*Condor*, vol. 20, pp. 164-166, portrait-photo) Stephens, as result of much editorial urging, published an autobiography which gives the main facts concerning his early career. He regularly attended the annual meetings of the Club whenever held south of Tehachapi, the last one being that of April 17, 1936, in Los Angeles.—J. G.

The compilation of indexes to the literature in various fields of science is an ever growing responsibility because of the ever augmenting mass of publication. In American ornithology this growth phenomenon is evidenced in the successively increased sizes of the 10-year indexes as already printed, of the *Auk* and of the *Condor*. The size of the job keeps growing, and the amount of energy, ornithological knowledge and judgment required of the compiler, if it could be measured, doubtless would show similar trend. The third 10-year index to the *Condor*, issued in 1931, was compiled by George Willett; the fourth 10-year index to this journal is now in process of preparation by John McB. Robertson (see note in *Condor*, 1937, page 93). The fourth 10-year index to the *Auk*, issued in 1934, was the work chiefly of Harry S. Swarth, and the same compiler had undertaken to do the fifth *Auk* index. Indeed he had well launched himself upon this new project when he died, in 1935. Then, Harry Harris, well qualified by previous indexing experience, consented to take over the job; but failing eyesight on his part has compelled him to relinquish the undertaking. Now, by appointment of President A. C. Bent, of the American Ornithologists' Union, George Willett has undertaken to carry forward the compilation of the fifth ten-year index to the *Auk*. This is, of course, a service not only to the A.O.U. but, when completed, to ornithologists the world over, to whomever will seek clues to

the informational content of the volumes of that journal for the period 1931 to 1940, inclusive.—J. G.

As one of its major objectives, "the publication of ornithological knowledge," the Cooper Club has issued a long list of contributions in its Pacific Coast Avifauna series. These, previously, have been mainly in the nature of state lists, faunal reports, indexes, and bibliographies. The last one to be issued, however, number 25, "The Natural History of Magpies," differs in kind of topic. It was hoped that, by thus increasing the scope of this series, a wider interest would be aroused and the avifauna series would be made to reflect more closely the trend of activities on the part of the present-day membership of the Club and on that of other bird students. Features of the new avifauna, aside from the text of chiefly natural history bearing, are a colored frontispiece, special full-tone reproduction of some of the illustrations, and cloth binding for part of the copies. The report combines items selected from thousands of publications with the results of direct field study of the Californian yellow-billed magpie and of the black-billed form, of western North America. Comparisons are made between these and others of the seventeen kinds of magpies known to inhabit the northern hemisphere. The author, Jean M. Linsdale, has done an admirable and exhaustive piece of work of its kind. The publication of the results of his efforts was made financially possible by a number of Cooper Club members who were convinced that this type of research would be widely welcomed. Copies of the book are obtainable, unbound or bound, as desired, from W. Lee Chambers, 2068 Escarpa Drive, Eagle Rock, Los Angeles.—J. G.

There is probably no naturalist better informed as to the general condition of wild-life in northern North America today than Dr. Rudolph M. Anderson, who is Chief of the Division of Biology, National Museum of Canada. A recent well-considered utterance of his bears authoritatively on current discussions of factors known or supposed to have had to do with water-fowl decimation. In a publication entitled "Canada's Western Northland" (King's Printer, Ottawa, 1937, p. 120), Dr. Anderson says: "It may be well to controvert the inherited folk-lore as well as propaganda prevalent among sportsmen in more southern districts (in Canada as well as in the United States) that the game birds, particularly swans, geese, ducks, and shore-birds, are being exterminated by Eskimos and Indians somewhere in a vague North Country. The average native is not a hunter for sport, and in most districts

ammunition is too expensive to waste on small returns. The territory is so large that only a relatively small section is hunted frequently, and there is virtually untouched breeding ground in every district.—J. G.

The quality of certain illustrations appearing in the *Condor* in the last two years has been enhanced by aid rendered through the Works Progress Administration, Project W. P. No. 6079-5797. Maps constituting figures 4 and 32 in volume 38, and figures 7, 14, 21, and 69 in volume 39 have been reworked from the originals by this agency. Thus, good appearance and clarity have been insured, and the end-product of research has been made that much better.—A.H.M.

A tendency manifest in present-day ornithological activity is apparently somewhat away from systematics and faunistics, but at any rate definitely toward studies of the living birds. More and more qualified ornithologists are centering attention each upon a single species, or upon a small, nearly related group of species. And it is the *living* bird or population that is being concentrated upon, through disciplined observation in the field, supplemented, in some instances, by such techniques as banding. We think in illustration at the moment, of the following projects under way, some of them already published upon in part, but none, of course, ever to be considered as absolutely completed: Margaret M. Nice on song sparrows; Herbert Friedmann on cowbirds; Mary M. Erickson on wren-tits; Ernest I. Dyer on California thrashers; Barbara D. Blanchard on white-crowned sparrows; Jean M. Linsdale on magpies; the Micheners on mockingbirds; Anders H. Anderson on cactus wrens; E. Lowell Sumner, Jr., on California quail; Harry W. Hann on the oven-bird (reported upon in September, 1937, issue of *Wilson Bulletin*); Gayle Pickwell on horned larks; William E. Ritter on the California woodpecker; John T. Emlen, Jr., on crows; Elmer C. Aldrich on the Allen hummingbird; Howard H. Twining on the Sierra Nevada rosy finch. And doubtless there are others. Choose your bird!—J. G.

MINUTES OF COOPER CLUB MEETINGS NORTHERN DIVISION

JULY.—The regular monthly meeting of the Northern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was held on Thursday, July 22, 1937, at 8:00 p.m., in Room 2503 Life Sciences Building, Berkeley, with President Kinsey in the chair and sixty-four members and guests present. Minutes of the Northern Division for June were read and approved. Minutes of the Southern Division for June were read.

The recording secretary made known the fact that large numbers of birds were meeting death by drinking at the cyanide tank of the Gold Crown Mine, within the Joshua Tree National Monument, near Twentynine Palms, California, and was authorized to write to the operators of the mine, protesting this condition.

The meeting was opened to field observations. Mr. Kinsey reported the capturing, in a Verbal trap, of a Spotted Owl, a species rare in Marin County. He also told of two pure albino Linnets which were taken from the nest and successfully reared at a local pet store. Another member mentioned having seen a Linnet with white markings on the tail. Miss Stedman told of two Cardinals, brought from Mexico, which had been in captivity in Oakland for a year and a half, and which were in good color and full song. Mr. Kinsey added that the color of the plumage of Cardinals and certain other species is often enhanced when the birds are kept in sunny aviaries. Mr. Grinnell cited a paper relating to temperatures of birds, by Dayton Stoner of the New York State Museum at Albany. His work indicates wide variation in temperature within a single species, or even in a given individual under different conditions. Mr. Alden Miller reported that his summer-session class, in seeking possible effects of recent extensive destruction of birds by oil from a submerged tanker, had found the Murre colony at Point Reyes to be as large this year as in previous years.

As speaker of the evening, Mr. Loye Miller, of the University of California at Los Angeles, gave a delightful account of his recent observations upon the Black-footed Albatross, off the coast of southern California. He prefaced his remarks by several examples of cycles of population among birds. The studies of the albatrosses were made from the State Fisheries ship "Blue-Fin," in use for field work by the Scripps Institute of Oceanography at La Jolla. Interesting discussion followed the talk, Mr. Miller answering a number of questions from members.

Adjourned.—FRANCES CARTER, *Recording Secretary*.

AUGUST.—The regular monthly meeting of the Northern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was held on Thursday, August 26, 1937, at 8:00 p.m., in Room 2503 Life Sciences Building, Berkeley, with eighty-three members and guests present. President Kinsey turned the chair over to Vice-president Cain, who presided for the remainder of the meeting. Minutes of the Northern Division for July were read and approved. Minutes of the Southern Division were read. Names proposed for membership were: Victor H. Cahalane, Wildlife Division, National Parks Service, Washington, D. C., by J. M. Linsdale; Ian McTaggart Cowan, Provincial Museum, Victoria,