

## NOTES AND NEWS

The International Ornithological Congress that met this year in Rouen, France, accepted the invitation of the American Ornithologists' Union to hold the next meeting in the United States. This will be the first time that the Congress has convened in the New World. Appropriately, Dr. Alexander Wetmore was elected president. We may look forward with great pleasure, then, to 1942 when the Tenth International Congress will bring many visiting ornithologists to this country. The exact place and time of meeting are not yet determined.—A.H.M.

"The Bird Life of Louisiana" by Harry C. Oberholser was received by us on August 13 of this year. It was published by the State of Louisiana Department of Conservation, as Bulletin No. 28 of that department, in cooperation with the Biological Survey, United States Department of Agriculture. This is the first comprehensive treatment of the birds of Louisiana and it takes a place of distinction among the increasing array of "state" bird books. The work comprises xii+834 pages, and 45 plates, eight of which are in color, engraved from paintings by Brooks, Sawyer, Horsfall and Sutton; it is well printed, except for the inking of the illustrations. There are short introductory sections on bird migration and protection, but the volume is given over chiefly to the accounts of species. These include information on habitat, distinguishing features and habits, and especially detailed records of occurrence within the state which appear to have been compiled with great care. Dr. Oberholser, ever active in nomenclatural matters, has adopted many scientific names not currently used. As always, the trend is toward greatly subdivided genera. Thus, the book becomes important to the nomenclaturalist who may have no concern with the geographic region treated by it. Convenient references to the A. O. U. Check-list are supplied where unfamiliar names are used, and in many, but unfortunately not all, such instances reasons for the adoption of names are given.—A.H.M.

"The Log of Tanager Hill" (Williams and Wilkins Company, Baltimore, 1938; 244 pp.) by Marie Andrews Commons is an unpretentious diary of eight years of bird banding at Lake Minnetonka, Minnesota. It is pleasantly written, though not provided with a central theme that would stimulate consecutive reading. It fills well the need for a book to recommend to prospective and beginning banders, pointing the way to

the enjoyment and knowledge to be gained from operating a banding station. It also affords a good example of care and exactness in the keeping of banding records.—A.H.M.

Under pressure from certain sportsmen who have requested more liberal waterfowl hunting regulations, the United States Biological Survey has this year relaxed the provisions for protecting the duck populations. The hunting season has been extended from 30 to 45 days and the possession limit, which as far as the ducks are concerned amounts to the bag limit, has been raised from 10 to 20. Justification for this is sought in the greater numbers of waterfowl since 1934. It has been estimated that in the four years the increase has amounted to 25 per cent. The season and the possession limits are now increased 50 to 100 per cent, respectively, in a single year. Just at a glance the books do not seem to balance; the ducks are in the red. To be sure, these items can not be added up like dollars and cents. But, with this liberalization, it is probable that numbers will drop again to the 1934 level. The new provision permitting the taking of limited numbers of canvasbacks, redheads, buffleheads and ruddy ducks, heretofore fully protected, may have some merit. It will avoid some wastage of these species that inevitably are shot by mistake. It may do them no harm; it can not do them any good. In future years we may expect still more pressure to extend the season and to restore baiting. To this there must be no yielding.—A.H.M.

### MINUTES OF COOPER CLUB MEETINGS

#### NORTHERN DIVISION

MAY.—The regular monthly meeting of the Northern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was held on Thursday, May 26, 1938, at 8:00 p.m., in Room 2503 Life Sciences Building, Berkeley, with President Emlen in the chair and about ninety members and guests present. Minutes of the Northern Division for April were read and approved. Names proposed for membership were: William F. Barr, 1606 53rd Avenue, Oakland, by Alden H. Miller, and Miss Annie R. Richardson, 162 Melville Avenue, Palo Alto, California, by Wilbur V. Henry.

President Emlen called attention to the meetings of the Western Society of Naturalists and the American Ecological Society, in connection with the meeting of the American Association for the

Advancement of Science, at San Diego, June 20 to 25. He also announced that the American Society of Mammalogists would meet in Berkeley, July 19 to 23. Mr. Alden H. Miller reviewed a recent publication of the Field Museum of Natural History, *The Birds of El Salvador*, by Dickey and van Rossem.

Lieutenant Commander Reuben H. Hunt, of the U. S. Navy Medical Corps, gave a delightful account of the birds of Midway Island, illustrating his talk with lantern slides. He contrasted present development of the island as a base for Pan American Airways with conditions in the "good old days," when the Commercial Pacific Cable Company first established there, and the trip to San Francisco in the auxiliary schooner "Florence Ward" might take as long as thirty days. One of the most popular birds of the island is the Laysan Albatross or "Gooney," which nests there in large numbers and is exceedingly tame. Progressive steps in the elaborate "Gooney dance," which takes place all during the nesting season, were shown in a series of pictures taken at close range. The Black-footed Albatross or "Black Gooney" has a dance which is quite similar but set at a slower tempo, so that attempts at dancing between members of the two species are unsuccessful. Nesting Sooty Terns number in the tens of thousands. The graceful White or Fairy Tern lays its egg upon the bare limb of a tree. Commander Hunt expressed some concern over the future welfare of these many nesting birds on account of man's activities at the island.

At the close of the meeting, Mr. and Mrs. Milton Ray exhibited ten beautiful photographs of British birds, the work of Mr. Oliver G. Pike, which they had obtained on a recent trip to England.

Adjourned.—FRANCES CARTER, *Recording Secretary*.

JUNE.—The regular monthly meeting of the Northern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was held on Thursday, June 23, 1938, at 8:00 p.m., in Room 2503 Life Sciences Building, Berkeley, with the Vice-President, E. L. Sumner, Jr., in the chair and thirty-five members and guests present. Minutes of the Northern Division for May were read. Minutes of the Southern Division were read in part. An application for membership was received from Asa L. Brown, Janesville, California, endorsed by Eric C. Kinsey.

Mrs. Grinnell read a field report from Mr. Merrick F. Hersey, telling of the experiments of Mr. Odel Johnson upon a nesting pair of Black Phoebes at Crockett, California. Four successive clutches of eggs were taken from these birds, after which they reared four young in a new nest. A letter from Miss Grace Nicholes described the nesting of Wood Ducks near Healdsburg.

Last year they had reared five young and this year were again successful. Mrs. Mead recounted some activities of Western Grebes and their chicks, seen on Clear Lake May 28. One chick had remained clinging to the back of its parent during a complete dive. At Chester, near Lake Almanor, June 11, Mrs. Mead saw 10 pairs of Canada Geese on a gravel bar, each accompanied by 4 or 5 goslings. At Eagle Lake, Mr. Kinsey had noticed nesting Pigmy Nuthatches, Western Bluebirds and Mountain Bluebirds inhabiting the same stump, apparently without rivalry.

The principal speaker of the evening, Mr. George T. Oberlander, presented a paper entitled "History of Acquaintance with Three Black Phoebes." Observations carried on regularly since August 1937 gave a detailed picture of the movements, definition of territory, feeding habits and nesting of these birds, in an area including much of the University campus and Strawberry Canyon. Dr. T. S. Palmer contributed information about Black Phoebes in the same area fifty years ago, when the Palmer home occupied the present site of the west wall of the stadium.

Adjourned.—FRANCES CARTER, *Recording Secretary*.

JULY.—The regular monthly meeting of the Northern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was held on Thursday, July 28, 1938, at 8:00 p.m., in Room 2503 Life Sciences Building, Berkeley, with President Emlen in the chair and sixty-five members and guests present. Minutes of the Northern Division for June were read and approved. Minutes of the Southern Division were read by title.

The president outlined the main points in a paper entitled "The Truth about Mosquito Control," by W. S. Corkran, written in answer to charges contained in William Vogt's paper "Thirst on the Land," which was reviewed before the November 1937 meeting of the Club. Reports of field observations included discussion of shore-bird migration by several members.

Motion pictures of the animal life of the Aleutian Islands were shown by Mr. Olaus J. Murie, photographer of the 1936 and 1937 expeditions of the Biological Survey to the islands. Most of the islands in this chain, extending 1200 miles beyond southwestern Alaska, have been set aside by the Biological Survey as the "Aleutian Island Bird Reservation." Blue foxes, raised for their fur, live practically in a wild state on many of the islands. One recommendation of the expeditions was that certain islands be reserved for the exclusive use of colonies of the rarer birds, such as the Whiskered Auklet and the Fulmar. Among the birds found in various parts of the archipelago were the Emperor Goose, several species of petrel, albatrosses, Pacific Kittiwakes, Tufted Puffins and murres.

Sea Lions play an important part in the economy of the island natives, who are decreasing rapidly but may be found living in small villages of from 45 to 90 inhabitants.

The sea otter, whose recent trend toward increase in numbers after threatened extinction has aroused such interest, is found on some of the smaller islands. Pictures of the otters on the reefs and kelp beds which are their habitat were especially interesting. The tremendous enjoyment afforded the expeditions by the wealth of bird life emphasized the future need of careful accounting of such precious areas. (After the meeting, Dr. T. S. Palmer recalled that it was B. W. Evermann, a former president of the Cooper Club, who first suggested the establishment of the Aleutian Islands as a bird reserve, some thirty years ago.)

Present in the audience were Dr. Harry R. Painton and Mr. Fred A. Schneider, two of the four founders of the Cooper Club.

Adjourned.—FRANCES CARTER, *Recording Secretary*.

#### SOUTHERN DIVISION

MAY.—The regular monthly meeting of the Southern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was held at the Los Angeles Museum, Exposition Park, on Tuesday, May 31, 1938, at 8 p.m., with about fifty members and guests present. In the absence of the president, Vice-President Peyton presided.

The minutes of the Southern Division for March were read and approved. The minutes of the Northern Division for March and April were read by title.

Four applications for membership were read: Mrs. Irene Sebastian, 6838 Sunset Blvd., Hollywood, Calif., proposed by Stuart O'Melveny; James G. Suthard, 832 Ohio Ave., Long Beach, Calif., by W. Lee Chambers; Harrison Brown, Hornby Island, B. C., Canada, by Bill Webb; Wm. Johnson Howard, 904 Grace Securities Bldg., Richmond, Va., by J. McB. Robertson.

Mr. J. McB. Robertson announced that Ralph Hoffmann's "Birds of the Pacific States" has been reissued at the new price of \$3.50.

Reports on recent observations by members included the following. Mr. Appleton saw a Yellow-billed Magpie on Ventura Blvd. near Laurel Canyon Road. Mr. Willett found a female Western Tanager feeding a young one in his backyard in the southwest residential district of Los Angeles. The young bird was able to fly. Mr. Platford observed gulls eating young Pintail Ducks near Santa Barbara. Mr. Reis reported Yellow Rails nesting at Long Valley, California. Mr. Sidney Peyton found ten fresh eggs of the Anthony Green Heron in a river bottom near Fillmore. Hildegarde Howard reported a pair of

Killdeer trying to raise four young on the gravel roof of the Los Angeles Museum.

Speaking on the subject "Some Birds of the West Coast of Mexico and Off-shore Islands," Mr. George Willett presented a review of his trip in the company of four other Cooper Club members on Mr. Pemberton's yacht. At the four points touched along the coast of Lower California the birds, with the exception of the White Ibis and Brewster Booby, were merely subspecifically distinct from those of California. Crossing the Gulf of California to Isabel Island and the Tres Marias the birds became more interesting. Brewster and the Blue-footed boobies, the Red-billed Tropic Bird and the Man-o'-war-bird were abundant at Isabel Island. Strangely enough, though this island is covered with vegetation, no land birds were seen. The densely timbered Magdalena Island of the Tres Marias group has a large avifauna related to the adjacent Mexican coast, including Yellow-headed Parrot, Copper-tailed Trogon, and Blue Mockingbird.

Continuing southward the party touched at seven points on the west coast of Mexico, finding tropical conditions from Navidad Bay to Acapulco and again at the farthest point south in the trip, Huatulco (latitude 15°). At Huatulco, trogons and Pileated Woodpeckers were plentiful. The return trip north was made by way of the outlying islands, collecting birds at San Benedicto, Socorro, Clarion, the San Benitos and Guadalupe. Regarding the closely associated islands of San Benedicto, Socorro and Clarion, it was pointed out that each of these islands has a different genus of wren. These are generically related to mainland birds but not to each other and indicate the accidental derivation of the island species.

From Guadalupe Island the party headed back to the mainland at San Martín, thence to the Coronados and to San Pedro. The trip lasted approximately three months, from January 19 to April 15.

Mr. Willett had four trays of bird skins laid out for study by the members.

Adjourned.—HILDEGARDE HOWARD, *Secretary*.

JUNE.—Approximately three hundred members and guests assembled at the Los Angeles Museum on Tuesday, June 28, 1938, for the regular monthly meeting of the Southern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club. The meeting was called to order by President McCoy at 7:35 p.m.

By motion from the floor the reading of the minutes of the previous meeting was dispensed with. One application for membership was read: George Levant Thompson, 2047 Stillman Street, Selma, Calif., proposed by W. T. Shaw.

There being no further business to come before the club, the president called upon Mr. J. R.

Pemberton to proceed with the scheduled program of the evening which consisted of motion pictures taken by Mr. Pemberton and Mr. Ed. N. Harrison, on the Pemberton Mexican trip of 1938.

The pictures followed the itinerary of the trip, with views of the islands and ports visited. Of particular interest to ornithologists were the many color photos of birds. Chief among these were the excellent views of the Blue-faced, Red-footed and Brewster boobies, both adults in full breeding plumage, and fledglings in the nest, and of two species of Man-o'-war-bird (*Fregata magnificens* and *Fregata minor*), clearly showing the brown shoulders of the male of *minor* which distinguish it from *magnificens*. The males of both species were shown exhibiting the bright red pouch.

Other birds pictured in color were the Red-billed Tropic Bird, Military Macaw, the Turkey and Black vultures (with downy young of the latter), Caracara, and Brown Pelican. Action scenes of birds included pelicans diving from the air into the water to capture their food, thousands of cormorants in flight at Magdalena Bay, boobies in their peculiar "military drill," and a Black-footed Albatross following the ship.

Of general interest were views of Manta rays, sharks, and several other large fish; sea elephants were photographed at San Benito Island. Two sea lions with the sea elephants afforded the opportunity for comparison of the two types. The former, with strong, relatively large flippers, appeared surprisingly graceful and agile in contrast with the heavy, more cumbersome sea elephant, with its very small, weak front limbs.

Interspersed throughout the six reels of film were various scenes of life on the ship and of the activities engaged in, such as dredging, fishing, skinning birds and mammals, drying skeletons, etc. As five Cooper Club members were in the party, these intimate views were particularly entertaining. In all, the pictures represent a well-rounded record of the expedition.

At the conclusion of the program, the president made a brief announcement to the visitors regarding membership in the club.

Adjourned.—HILDEGARDE HOWARD, *Secretary*.

JULY.—The regular monthly meeting of the Southern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was held at the Los Angeles Museum, Exposition Park on Tuesday, July 26, 1938, at 8 p.m. Eighteen members and two guests were present, with Mr. McCoy presiding.

The minutes of the Southern Division for June were read and a correction made changing "at San Benito Island" to read "on the eastern island of the San Benito group." Six applications for membership were read, as follows: Frank Fairfax Lockwood, Palos Verdes Estates, Calif., Clarence

J. Parker, 821 North Garfield Ave., Alhambra, Calif., and Russell K. Grater, P. O. Box 395, Boulder City, Nevada, all proposed by W. Lee Chambers; Mrs. Myrtle Thompson, 260 Orange St., San Bernardino, Calif., and Mrs. Elizabeth Bradley, 527 Mountain View Ave., San Bernardino, Calif., proposed by Wilson C. Hanna; and George Hines Lowery, Jr., Box 316, Louisiana State University, Louisiana, by George Willett.

There being no scheduled program for the evening, the president called for comments and observations from the members. Dr. Archibald Bell called attention to two publications of interest to Cooper Club members: one the book by Donald Culross Peattie, "The Prairie Grove," which deals with the early natural history of Illinois, the other, Dr. Frank Lillie's address before the Ottawa meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, published in *Science* for July 22, 1938, in which the future of zoological sciences is discussed. Dr. Bell voiced his own opinion that the conservation program is an important phase of the future of ornithology.

Miss Fossler suggested the advisability of the Cooper Club taking a more active part in conservation matters. Mr. John McB. Robertson explained that the Cooper Club was organized for educational purposes, with greatest stress on scientific publication, and not as a conservation society. He pointed out that the Audubon Society is the organization which is particularly concerned with conservation.

Sid Platford reported upon the new 1938 waterfowl regulations which he fears will be detrimental to the birds. He also reported the observation of a substantial breeding colony of Least Terns near Del Rey.

Mr. Willett gave a report of the meeting of the American Society of Mammalogists in Berkeley, July 19 to 23, 1938.

Mr. Ed Harrison reported seeing large numbers of Wood Ibis in various parts of San Diego County recently. Mr. Couch had observed that the *Phainopepla* were not nesting this year east of the mountains in the region of San Diego, though they have appeared as usual on the coastal slopes to breed.

Dr. Bell gave a brief report on the natural history activities of the Los Angeles Junior College, indicating that the college now has 500 bird skins and about 300 mammal skins. Students are taken on short trips to observe different forms of animal life. An interesting note from one of his trips was the occurrence of Clark Crows in flocks of 50 to 100 on Mt. Pinos.

Mr. McCoy announced the tentative programs for the remainder of the year, and Mr. Harrison indicated that he could have some more moving pictures for the Club soon.

Adjourned.—HILDEGARDE HOWARD, *Secretary*.