

long as man stays out of sight of the nesting murre and the population of the gulls is within reasonable limits, the gull gets for the most part only a scavenger's share of the murre eggs—mostly the abandoned ones. But, if the murre's vigil becomes weakened by any influence, such as disturbance, the former scavenger has little trouble in securing many eggs. . . . Gulls which have lost their eggs by accident, or because man has destroyed them as an attempt to control the gull population, do not appear to leave their nesting territory any earlier than those gulls which rear young. As a result of general commotion which they set up because of the loss of the first set of eggs, the fuss they make in rebuilding the nest, and the general lack of demands on their time which the feeding of young birds would preclude, they are, at times, more serious enemies to other nesting birds than individual pairs of gulls which are allowed to breed normally. . . . It is this unoccupied group of gulls that [Mr. Johnson says] I found were taking the greater portion of the unguarded murre eggs and newly hatched Eider ducklings." And further: "... By the very nature of the murre's responses to fear [which he fully describes], the gradual disappearance of that great Farallon breeding population nesting in a location exposed to gull damage was an inevitable consequence of the disturbance by human eggers." And of course there are many categories of human disturbers with objectives other than those of the old-time "eggers".—J. G.

We learn with deep regret of the death of Dr. John C. Phillips on November 14, 1938. A most effective and wise conservationist, he will be greatly missed in the high councils of wildlife protection. Dr. Phillips had been a member of the Cooper Club since 1911. He was especially well known for his excellent volumes on the "Natural History of the Ducks."—A. H. M.

"The California Woodpecker and I; a study in comparative zoology in which are set forth numerous facts and reflections by one of us about both of us", is the whimsical and explanatory title of a book by Professor William E. Ritter (University of California Press, Berkeley, xiii+340 pp., 28 figs. in text, 1938); excellent portraits of the two interesting subjects of this study are added. The author approaches the comparison of birds and men in a decidedly philosophic mood, figuratively picking up each item, examining it from every angle and looking through and beyond it. The comparison does not press far into technical detail, and much space is devoted to reflection upon the significance of elementary facts about the anatomy and physiology of birds and mammals. Philosophical discussions are difficult to evaluate and they appeal variously to readers of different tastes. To this reviewer, the

last two chapters, on the way of life in relation to mind and brain and on the author's personal outlook on nature, were especially pleasing. They admirably reflect the feeling of a true naturalist and the great satisfaction that comes to one who has lived with and knows the animal world. The first third of the book is chiefly about California Woodpeckers and deserves special attention here. Truly remarkable are the ways of life of this species. It has abandoned many of the customary instincts of woodpeckers, and gathers, stores and eats acorns in ways which are highly adaptive; yet in storing it does many things that reflect the rigidity of its instincts and the lack of thought. California Woodpeckers live in settlements. Territory is an affair of the settlement or community, not of males or of pairs. Nest-building, incubation and feeding of the young are community projects in which the participating individuals of both sexes appear to get along most amicably. The birds seem able to recognize types of oaks and spacings of trees which are specially suited to the conduct of community life. A better species for a naturalist to study can scarcely be imagined.—A. H. M.

The Bank Swallow seems likely the least numerous in aggregate numbers of any of the species of swallow occurring in California. Records of it in the ornithological literature for this state are fewest, even as appearing in the migrations. And authentically recorded sites of nesting colonies number not more than twelve all told; most of these records are for years long passed and for places now unfit for occupancy by a bird of such specialized nesting habits. Some of the older records, too, are dubious because of the chance of confusion in identity with the Rough-winged Swallow. The undersigned would be glad to receive from any Cooper Club member, definite information as to the location of any present nesting colony of Bank Swallows within the boundaries of California, with approximate number of birds comprising such colony. By "present" may be understood as meaning in 1937 or 1938.—J. GRINNELL, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California.*

#### MINUTES OF COOPER CLUB MEETINGS

##### SOUTHERN DIVISION

SEPTEMBER.—The regular monthly meeting of the Southern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was held at the San Diego Zoo, Balboa Park, San Diego, on Sunday, September 24, 1938, at 1:15 p.m. Twenty-eight members and guests gathered around a large picnic table on the lawn beside the penguin pool for a short business meeting before making a tour of the zoo.

Upon unanimous vote of the members the reading of the minutes of the previous meeting

was dispensed with. President McCoy called upon Dr. Abbott to say a few words. Dr. Abbott greeted the out-of-town visitors and extended an invitation to all present to stop at his home after the meeting for refreshments. He then introduced Mrs. Benchley, Director of the Zoo. Mrs. Benchley called attention to three things in particular which she wanted the group to see: The recently acquired Monkey-eating Eagle; the Black-backed Bitterns, which, though not in captivity, remain around the aviary; and a similarly minded Wood Ibis which lingered on after the flock of twenty-seven wild ibises had left the park.

Mrs. Grace Sargent, of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, made a brief announcement regarding the work of color-banding gulls, and distributed charts showing the types of bands used, with instructions as to whom to notify in case any gulls so banded should be observed.

At the conclusion of the business meeting, the members voted that thanks be extended to Mrs. Benchley for her hospitality to the Club, and Dr. Abbott was asked to convey the message to her.

With Mrs. Benchley and Mr. Gander as guides, the party then proceeded to visit the various bird cages, passing first to the magnificent raptor cage, containing South American and California condors, caracaras, and various eagles and hawks, thence along the trail bordered by small cages containing, respectively, Galapagos Hawks, California Condor, Fish Owls, Snowy Owls, Prairie Falcon, Duck Hawk, Turkey Vultures, two King Vultures in excellent plumage, Laughing Jackass, and Boatbill Heron. Another large aviary contained many different species, particularly of waterbirds. From here Mrs. Benchley took the group into a closed area in which birds not yet ready for exhibition are kept. Here the party was treated to a private view of the Monkey-eating Eagle, a magnificent bird, apparently in perfect health and in prime plumage. Mrs. Benchley explained that, because the bird is the only one in any American zoo, they are taking the utmost care to study its habits and establish the proper diet for it before venturing to put it before the public.

At this point the party disbanded. Later, members gathered informally at the home of Dr. and Mrs. Abbott for tea.

Adjourned.—HILDEGARDE HOWARD, *Secretary*.

#### NORTHERN DIVISION

SEPTEMBER.—The regular monthly meeting of the Northern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was held on Thursday, September 22, 1938, at 8:00 p.m., in Room 2503 Life Sciences Building, Berkeley, with President Emlen in the chair and fifty-four members and guests present. Minutes of the Northern Division for August were read, corrected, and approved. Min-

utes of the Southern Division were read. Names proposed for membership were: A. Sidney Hyde, 3997 Washington Street, San Francisco, by Alden H. Miller; Thomas Smith Kelly, 3rd, 1799 Euclid Avenue, Berkeley, by Seth B. Benson; Ronald Ward Smith, Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, by Frank Richardson.

Mr. E. L. Sumner, Sr., made an announcement regarding the program of gull banding on the Pacific coast.

Mrs. Kelly opened field reports with the statement that Avocets and Lesser Yellow-legs might be seen at Alameda. She had seen Northern Phalaropes on a small pool south of the main pool in the Berkeley Aquatic Park, and expressed the wish that the small pool might be preserved in its present condition as a valuable natural sanctuary, since the main pool has been so highly developed for boating. It was moved and carried that the secretary forward Mrs. Kelly's suggestion to the proper city officials. Mr. Laidlaw Williams had seen two Parasitic Jaegers at Moss Landing, Monterey County, August 7. Six Bonaparte Gulls at Moss Landing, September 8, were the first recorded for this season. Dates of arrival of birds at Carmel included the Townsend Warbler, September 8; Lincoln Sparrow, September 10; and Say Phoebe, September 12. A flock of 30 Tricolored Red-wings on September 10 was an unusual record for the Carmel region. Mr. Alden Miller had seen a shrike in Strawberry Canyon and said that he would be interested in further observations on that species, as it had not been seen there since 1927. Mr. Dyer commented on the fall singing of thrashers. Mr. Kinsey told of seeing a Road-runner on the north approach of the Golden Gate Bridge.

Mr. Albert Wolfson spoke on "Experimental Studies in Bird Migration." The causes of migration, including original causes in the geologic past and present stimulating factors, were considered. He reviewed the work of Rowan and others, who have attempted to determine experimentally the relation between annual external stimuli and the internal stimuli of the reproductive cycle in initiating migration. Mr. Wolfson's own experiments consisted in exposing a number of captive individuals of migratory races of the Oregon Junco to increased lighting comparable to that normally encountered during migration. These birds were released late in May with gonads in full breeding condition. Failure to observe any of these marked individuals for more than one day succeeding their release could lead only to the supposition that the migratory instinct must have been active independent of the phase of the reproductive cycle. Stimulating discussion, in which many members participated, followed the speaker's contribution.

Adjourned.—FRANCES CARTER, *Recording Secretary*.