

## NOTES AND NEWS

On May 29, 1939, came word of the passing of our editor and eminent leader of ornithology in western North America, Joseph Grinnell. This issue of the *Condor* was on his desk, the editing of it nearly finished. For thirty-four years the *Condor* was his continued responsibility. His tireless effort, his search for improvements and the guiding influence of his editorial criticism, applied throughout most of the history of the journal, are largely responsible for its scientific and literary standing. We who lately have been privileged to work with him can but marvel at his sustained enthusiasm in his editorial tasks. There is no serious student of vertebrate animals in North America that needs to be reminded of Joseph Grinnell's accurate and prodigious contribution to our literature and to his building of the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology as a research institution. Of his personal attributes, only a few can be singled out here in this brief notice as impressing us most forcefully. As we perceived his philosophy, the thing that seemed to him of most lasting value was the published record of research. Writing was his natural outlet, his mode of expression. Yet, the great number of his warm friendships were fostered by no means solely through his extensive correspondence. In conversation he generously gave of his time, listened sympathetically and freely contributed from his great fund of information. Without any overt expression, one soon felt a reserved but wholly genuine personal attachment. He did not in the slightest way presume upon the respect and affection which his associates held for him. He was one who did things and sought no special recognition for it, who avoided time consuming honorary functions because there was so much interesting and valuable work to be done. One of his remarkable qualities in late years was youthfulness of mind, involving the ability to change his views and to criticize his earlier ideas and conclusions. This drew younger persons to him; they admired him, and in turn he relied on them. This was the man, the stimulating teacher, idealist and leader, who is lost to us while still active in the work which only he could do so well.—A.H.M.

According to a report by C. W. Lockerbie in this issue of the *Condor* (p. 170), starlings have now appeared in Utah. It seems that invasion of the Pacific Coast area is imminent. Much as we may regret the anticipated arrival of these birds, there is nothing that can be done to prevent it. Our one consolation is the opportunity we will have to record the way in which an invading species establishes itself. Much may be learned of biological importance if every person interested in birds in the areas now free of starlings

records in fullest detail the circumstances connected with the invasion. Not only the first arrival should command attention, but the many adjustments in populations of starlings and of other birds which will follow the pioneering period should be carefully noted. It will be some time before starlings reach a state of equilibrium in the West, and every shred of information pertaining to their natural history should be gathered during that time. When the English Sparrow spread westward, bird observers were much less numerous than at present and a rather incomplete picture is left us of the details of their dispersal. Will we do better on the starling problem? We are indebted to Dr. Lawrence E. Hicks, who is studying starlings in the Middle West, for recalling to mind our strategic position for the future study of this species.—A.H.M.

A concluding statement in the *Wildlife Research and Management Leaflet* of the United States Biological Survey, January, 1939, by Ralph H. Imler and E. R. Kalmbach is quoted below. The subject of their report is crow damage in Oklahoma, but their conclusions carry implications of a general nature. "Comparison of data obtained from the field with those from questionnaires was possible in one county . . . and it revealed that estimates of the percentage of crops lost was about 6 times, and of financial losses, 16 times greater in the returns from questionnaires than in the data obtained from field appraisal. Estimates of numbers of crows (complicated by the fact that the questionnaire returns may have included duplicate counting of roosts and groups of crows) also were higher in the questionnaire returns. On the whole the study again brought out the fact, long known to economic ornithologists, that the more or less casual appraisal of crop losses by their owners is almost certain to be exaggerated. Some of this is due to that most characteristic of human traits, a tendency to overestimate one's misfortunes. The graphic recollection of the worst experiences encountered, and possibly a none too accurate appraisal of damage in the first place, also may tend to aggravate the seriousness of by-gone events."

### MINUTES OF COOPER CLUB MEETINGS

#### NORTHERN DIVISION

MARCH.—The regular monthly meeting of the Northern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was held on Thursday, March 16, 1939, at 8:00 p. m., in Room 2503 Life Sciences Building, Berkeley, with President Emlen in the chair and sixty-six members and guests present. Minutes of the Northern Division for February were read