

NOTES AND NEWS

An essay contest, open to all nature lovers, has recently been announced by Claremont Colleges, California. The contest is part of a project to foster interest in the study of nature and to encourage an appreciation of beauty and other values in nature as a force in noble living. Manuscripts should be of suitable length for magazine publication, but should not exceed 3000 words, and must reach the judges before February 1, 1940. Three cash prizes are offered: first prize, \$100; second, \$75; third, \$50. Each essay should consist of an original study of some subject in nature and should embody the appreciation of such factors as beauty, strength, form, and variation. Drawings or photographs should be used if possible. Complete information concerning the contest may be obtained by writing the John Muir Nature Enterprise, Room 100, Harper Hall, Claremont, California.



Fig. 55. A. Brazier Howell, member of the Cooper Ornithological Club for 31 years, who assisted in placing the Club on a firm financial basis in the middle years of its history; contributor of many articles in the *Condor* and of a masterly review of the avifauna of the islands of southern California (*Pac. Coast Avif.* No. 12, 1917). Photograph by Bachrach.

MINUTES OF COOPER CLUB MEETINGS

SOUTHERN DIVISION

JULY.—About 75 members and guests assembled for the regular monthly meeting of the Southern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club held at the Los Angeles Museum on Tuesday, July 25, 1939. The meeting was called to order by President Peyton at 8:20 p. m.

The minutes of the Southern Division for June were read and approved. One application for membership was read: Robert Cyril Stebbins, Van Nuys, California, proposed by Loye Miller.

The secretary mentioned receipt of a letter from the Catalina Island Company inviting the Cooper Club to take advantage of special group rates to the island.

A letter from Mrs. Grinnell was read, in which she thanked the Southern Division for the wreath of flowers sent as a tribute to the memory of Joseph Grinnell.

The scheduled program of the evening comprised two reels of moving pictures of the sea otters off the coast of Monterey County. One reel, in black and white, was taken by Dr. Guy Rukke of Monterey, the other, partly in color, by Mr. J. R. Pemberton. Mr. Pemberton showed the films and made a few comments on the habits of the otters.

After the pictures, the meeting was open for questions and observations. Dr. Miller gave a resumé of a recent two weeks' voyage off the Mexican coast. Mr. Willett reported upon some birds seen off the coast of southern California a few days before and Mr. Brode discussed some birds seen on a trip into the southern Sierra.

Mr. Peyton announced that the program of the next meeting would be "The Life-history of the Long-billed Curlew," by Mr. Bennett.

Adjourned.—HILDEGARDE HOWARD, *Secretary*.

AUGUST.—The monthly meeting of the Southern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was held at the Los Angeles Museum on Tuesday, August 29, 1939, at 8 p. m. Mr. Peyton presided and there were about 60 members and guests present.

The minutes of the Southern Division for July were read and a correction made in the title of the paper announced for the August meeting.

Five applications for membership were read, as follows: Mrs. Ruth Wheeler, Angwin, California, proposed by Milton S. Ray; J. Laurence Murray, 115 N. Mayo Ave., Compton, California, by George G. Cantwell; Raymond F. Conway, care Feather River Logging Camp, Delleker, California, by Mrs. N. Edward Ayer; and Clifton M. Greenhalgh, 1230 E. 1st South, Salt Lake City, Utah, and Paul S. Bartholomew, U.S. Forest Service, Santa Barbara, California, both by W. Lee Chambers.

The resolutions of the Club regarding the loss of "its most revered and distinguished member," Joseph Grinnell, were read from the July minutes of the Northern Division. The Southern Division followed the Northern Division in unanimously endorsing these resolutions.

Mr. Willett announced that one of the recent maps of Southern California records "Pemberton Peak" in the middle of Santa Barbara County, where Mr. Pemberton has been studying the California Condor.

The program of the evening was given by Mr. Walter W. Bennett. His subject, "Siyo," or the Life of the Prairie Chicken," was presented largely by illustration—colored lantern slides, and motion pictures. The motion pictures traced the life of the Prairie Chicken from the booming and "dancing" of early spring, through all the vicissitudes of caring for the eggs, to the final hatching of the brood of chicks and their leaving the nest shortly thereafter.

Adjourned.—HILDEGARDE HOWARD, *Secretary*.

NORTHERN DIVISION

AUGUST.—The regular monthly meeting of the Northern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was held on Thursday, August 24, 1939, at 8:00 p. m., in Room 2503 Life Sciences Building, Berkeley, with President Emlen in the chair and 46 members and guests present. Minutes of the Northern Division for July were read and approved. Names proposed for membership were: Frank D. Fanning, P. O. Box 32, Safford, Arizona, by Lawrence V. Compton; and Verl Lee House, 2022 Bancroft Way, Berkeley, by Henry S. Fitch.

Three persons presented the main part of the program, which was devoted to summer field notes. Joe T. Marshall, Jr., speaking on birds of the Blue Mountains in southeastern Washington, demonstrated the method of night observation by means of a headlight with pocket batteries. This method enabled him to determine accurately the habitat of the Flammulated Screech Owl as the open park type of forest. On the night of July 20, accompanied by his brother, he walked down the trail from Lake Tenaya to Mirror Lake in Yosemite Valley, confirming his previous observations and correlating the habitat with the owl's foraging methods, which resemble those of the flycatchers.

Charles G. Sibley summarized a season's observations in the central Sierra Nevada, an area representing all life zones except Lower Sonoran. His work centered at Dutch Flat, in the Transition Zone, with trips to Desolation Valley, Pyramid Peak, and Carson Valley, Nevada. He noted the different stages of the breeding cycle within the same species at different altitudes, a phenomenon well illustrated by the Western Wood Pewees. Although extremely low precipitation is

generally considered to be detrimental in its effects on bird populations, Mr. Sibley hazarded speculation as to two possible compensating factors. Mild weather might result in lowered mortality and hence a larger breeding population for the next season. The possibility of early breeding might allow for completion of the cycle before the effects of excessive dryness were felt.

Mr. Richard M. Bond gave notes from Lincoln County, in southern Nevada, which is so confusing zonally as to present such occurrences as the Snowy Plover in creosote bush association. Many studies were made of the nesting of birds of prey. At a small spring in the Lower Sonoran Zone, literally "acres of doves" were seen, the question being whether the number should be estimated at 10 or only 5 thousand.

Adjourned.—FRANCES CARTER, *Recording Secretary*.

SEPTEMBER.—The regular monthly meeting of the Northern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Club was held on Thursday, September 28, 1939, at 8:00 p. m., in Room 2503 Life Sciences Building, Berkeley, with President Emlen in the chair and over 150 members and guests present. Minutes of the Northern Division for August were read and approved. Names proposed for membership were: Floyd E. Durham, 2593 Life Sciences Building, University of California, Berkeley, and Frank Alois Pitelka, Department of Zoology, University of California, Berkeley, both by Alden H. Miller. There was no further business to come before the club.

The speaker of the evening was Mr. Harry M. Bourland, of the Eastman Kodak Company, who presented "Some Birds of California," in colored motion pictures. For several years Mr. Bourland has been preparing a library of pictures on California birds, mammals and wild flowers. Some of the early work is being replaced with the superior film now available. It is Mr. Bourland's ambition in the study of birds to obtain complete series for each species, including adults, nest with eggs and young.

Large flocks of ducks and geese were shown feeding and in flight. Views of adult male and female Sandhill Cranes, with nest and eggs, were particularly good, as were slow motion shots of many adults in flight. A Bald Eagle was seen in altercation with a Red-tailed Hawk. The Screech Owl, Pigmy Owl and Burrowing Owl made an interesting series, while close-ups of a Great Horned Owl blinking in the sun proved highly entertaining. The California Condor was shown in its habitat.

Ornithologists can look forward with great expectation to the results of Mr. Bourland's continued work.

Adjourned.—FRANCES CARTER, *Recording Secretary*.