

NOTES AND NEWS

The Sixtieth Annual Meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union was held at the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia, October 12 to 16, 1942, with a registered attendance of 192. Twenty-seven scientific papers were read—many illustrated by color slides or films. Officers for the new year are: President, James L. Peters; Vice-presidents, George Willett and Hoyes Lloyd; Secretary, Lawrence E. Hicks; Treasurer, J. Fletcher Street; Editor, John T. Zimmer; new members of the Council: Arthur A. Allen, Rudolphe M. De Schauensee, Robert C. Murphy and Rudver Boulton. The Brewster Medal Award was made to Margaret M. Nice of Chicago for her publication on the "Life History of the Song Sparrow." Fellows elected were: Clarence Cottam, Rudolphe M. De Schauensee, and Harrison F. Lewis. Members named were: Earle R. Greene, Harry W. Hann, Robert C. Miller, Earle L. Poole, and S. Dillon Ripley. The 1943 meeting, if conditions permit, will be held in New York City, in October.—LAWRENCE E. HICKS.

Mr. N. B. Kinnear, Secretary of the British Ornithologists' Club, has invited members of the Cooper Club who are serving with the United States or Canadian armies in England to write to him. He will endeavor to put them in touch with local ornithologists and advise them concerning books. Mr. Kinnear's address is the British Museum (Natural History), Cromwell Road, London, S. W. 7.

Publication of the extensive article by Albert Wolfson in this issue of the Condor was made possible by gifts which contributed part of the expense of printing.

The editors of the Condor take occasion to thank several people who have assisted in the work of issuing volume 44 of the magazine. Mr. E. L. Sumner, Sr., has prepared the copy for the index and Hilda W. Grinnell, Janet Failla, Virginia D. Miller, Harvey I. Fisher and Frank A. Pitelka have aided with proof and manuscript.—A.H.M.

COMMUNICATION TO THE EDITOR

In its main outlines, a man's character is sketched early; time but deepens the etching. How "the child is father of the man" is further impressed upon me every time I read the charming biography of Charles Wallace Richmond in Gregory M. Mathews' great work on "The Birds of Australia" (Suppl. No. 4, 1925: iv-viii). Though unsigned, it is clearly identifiable by its whimsical humor as self-written.

From conversations with Richmond, the writer is able to describe one incident and to give details of two others, additional to the account cited and he has long had an urge to do something of the kind as a tribute to a lovable friend.

In his early collecting forays in what is now Rock Creek Park of the District of Columbia, Richmond was harassed by a certain policeman. From time to time the officer halted him but found no contraband. After a good deal of this hide and seek, Richmond was finally caught with the goods—a screech owl—and taken to court. The judge asked, "Don't you know you can't collect birds in the District of Columbia without a permit?" "Yes," replied Charlie, who had never mentioned permit to the officer, "here it is." Thereafter that particular policeman could no longer see him. The way in which this episode developed depended upon Richmond's personality and exemplifies the patiently humorous view of life that he held to the end.

One of the varied employments of Richmond's youth was as a page in Congress. In that period, opportunity threw in his way a quantity of passes to an exhibition in the Patent Office. The number being larger in his estimation than anyone could conceivably use, Charlie distributed a good many of them to acquaintances and the place of the exhibit was soon flooded with children. Investigation brought retribution, but who shall deny but that in the not wholly formed ethic of youth he felt fully justified in doing something for his friends. So regarded, this largess was an early example of an activity—helping others—of which he never wearied.

Many boys then indulged in bird-nesting but this was one boy with whom it was more than a passing fad. Nevertheless, he was surprised when he learned that there were grown men in the Smithsonian Institution who studied birds. Of course, he wanted to know them and he thought he might be better received if he came with a present. So bundling in a paper parcel some of his treasures—nests and eggs—he climbed the spiral stairs to the old dim and dusty Bird Gallery of the Smithsonian. At their head, he gave a shy knock on the first door, which was answered by a hearty, "come in." There sat a sandy-haired man with an impressive mustache that did nothing to decrease Richmond's awe. But the man, Robert Ridgway, saying, "Let's see what you have there sonny," helped to unwrap the package. Richmond was prepared to identify the contents but soon found that this was unnecessary, as Ridgway said, "So you've got a catbird's; and a cuckoo's, they're not so easy to find." On he went, commenting on

every specimen, "And you want to give them to us, that's fine." His reception was so kindly, so beyond anything Richmond expected, that the boy was in ecstasy. In later life he never could think of the visit without the tears coming. His ambition from that moment was to be an ornithologist, to be like Mr. Ridgway.

And he was like him, especially in generosity. He was kind to many others as Ridgway was to him. Despite the best of will, we are often unable to repay our benefactors, but we can in a sense repay by aiding others. With a genius for friendly helpfulness, there can be no doubt that C. W. R. over and over again repaid his debt of kindness.—W. L. McATEE.

PUBLICATIONS REVIEWED

Occasionally there appear well-prepared studies of local distribution of birds. A recent good example is Arthur C. Twomey's survey of "The Birds of the Uinta Basin, Utah" (Annals Carnegie Mus., 28, 1942:341-490, plates XXXIX-XLIX, including 16 photographs and three folding maps). The level of organization and general standards displayed in this paper are particularly heartening; for in the past few years, the attention paid to less explored parts of the North American continent has yielded a series of local lists many of which lack signs of concentrated study and groups of which might better have been published under a single title instead of being scattered through the ornithological literature.

Twomey's field studies were made from April to October in 1937, although specimens and data collected in 1934 and 1935 by A. C. Lloyd in certain parts of the study area were available to him. Considering time limitations and the size of the area (over 10,000 square miles), the author has succeeded in accumulating a surprisingly large amount of material.

Introductory sections discuss itinerary and major collecting localities. Geological and ecological features of the area are described well, and the text is accompanied by excellent maps of surface formations and plant communities. The area ranges in altitude from 4500 to 13,500 feet, and at least six major ecological zones are recognized. For each of these, characteristic birds and plant associates are discussed. Certain successional communities of importance in bird distribution are treated similarly.

The greater part of the paper is devoted to an annotated list of 208 species: of these eight are represented by two races, one by three races; an additional hybrid is also listed. One new race, *Sitta carolinensis uintaensis*, is described. Annotations include notes on systematics, local distribution, dates of occurrence, and natural history. There is a "bibliography of works consulted"

including almost 200 titles. Typographic slips are few; only four errors were detected in the body of the paper by this reviewer.

As regards the systematic aspect of the work, Twomey follows the 1931 A.O.U. Check-list "except for such changes and additions that the author believed justifiable." This conditional statement means little when one notes certain inconsistencies of treatment. Thus, some divergences from the A.O.U. Check-list are accompanied by discussions of specimens at hand and by references to bibliographic sources. In other instances, trinomials are used (as in *Sturnella neglecta*, *Oberholseria chlorura*, *Euphagus cyanocephalus*, *Icterus bullocki*, *Cyanocephalus cyanocephalus*, and others) which indicate an implicit acceptance of recently described races although no evidence is set forth to show why these races are regarded as "justifiable." There are and will be inevitable differences of opinion with respect to a number of races which Twomey lists. Several problems are opened to further study as, for example, the breeding of presumably both *Buteo borealis calurus* and *B. b. jueratesi* in the same area, and the relations of *Dendroica aestiva morcomi* and *D. a. brewsteri* in the Great Basin. If only for the sake of convenience, the author might have referred to sources in every instance when a systematic change or addition subsequent to the A.O.U. Check-list was introduced, since his bibliography lists most of these sources. But the bibliography is not comprehensive. Thus, in the case of *Tyrannus tyrannus*, no reference is made to discussions of the race *hespericola* by Zimmer (Am. Mus. Nov. No. 962, 1937:12) and Wetmore (Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., 86, 1939:199); under *Vireo gilvus*, no mention is made of Sibley's review of the western races (Condor, 42, 1940:255-258). The footnote on page 439 concerning *Vermivora ruficapilla* is superfluous since the point in question is adjusted by the 1931 Check-list.

In most species the use of the trinomial, whatever the decision as to name, is supported by specimens. The races of only two species (pages 367 and 407) are stated to have been "determined on geographic grounds." But trinomials are used in a number of additional species listed only on the basis of either field observation or second-hand reports. No specimens of *Astur atricapillus*, *Falco columbarius*, *Progne subis*, *Corvus corax*, *Spinus psaltria*, and others, were taken; the use of the trinomial in such instances seems inadvisable. *Glaucidium gnoma pinicola* is listed on the basis of a record which, at best, is hypothetical. *Numenius a. americanus* is listed on the basis of observations of individuals which might have included migrants of *N. a. occidentalis*.

As regards general distribution of species, it is