

NOTES AND NEWS

For a long time systematists and students of distribution have felt the need of a check-list of Mexican birds. Indeed, in the past eight years two presidents of the American Ornithologists' Union have urged, through the Research Committee, the preparation of such a list. While large collections of Mexican birds existed in museums on this side of the water, as well as in England and continental Europe, none of them contained a sufficient number of specimens with adequate modern data to make it possible to determine the distribution of so huge an avifauna. However, during the past few years large new collections have been made under the auspices of various public and private American museums. Preliminary work on a check-list has been in progress for some years by the chairman of the undersigned group, which has now agreed to push the work to completion. Nevertheless, publication should not be expected at an early date.

As this will be the first check-list of Mexican birds, we fully realize it may contain many errors and a revised edition may soon be required. In fact, we are properly conscious that one of the chief results of this work will be the opportunity it will give to all interested persons to point out imperfections and additional facts, so that a subsequent edition may be a great improvement. It is hoped that all workers in the Mexican field will cooperate with the undersigned. As soon as a preliminary draft of the manuscript is ready, criticism will be invited. All correspondence should be addressed to the chairman.

Due to the amount of new material available, it is hoped that it will be possible to give, with some attempt at detail, the distributions of many of the forms, but where this is not possible, definite statements to that effect will be made. For common names both English and Spanish will be employed. The undersigned are much pleased that Dr. Rafael Martin del Campo of the Instituto de Biología of Mexico City has agreed to supply the Spanish names, a task he is better qualified to undertake than anyone else.—HERBERT FRIEDMANN, LUDLOW GRISCOM, and ROBERT T. MOORE, *Chairman*.

To western bird banders and members of the Cooper Ornithological Club, Eustace Lowell Sumner was known as the helpful senior adviser of anyone interested in trapping and marking birds. Perhaps few were aware that he had in his youth been a bird student—an interest dating back to his childhood at the family home in east Oakland, California, near the present site of Mills College. Here a fundamental knowledge had been gained through the traditional stimulus of bird-egg collecting.

Sumner was born on July 10, 1871, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, the son of Arthur Sumner and Mary Augusta (Upton) Sumner. The family which included his brother, Francis B. Sumner, came to California when Eustace was three years of age. In 1884 they went to Colorado Springs, Colorado, and here Eustace spent part of his teens, and later, after schooling in Minneapolis, returned to engage in business. The years from 1905 to 1920 were spent in New York, with a position as advertising editor of the periodical *Marine Engineering*. Even while occupied with his business, he sustained his liking for birds and taught his son, E. Lowell Sumner, Jr., to study them in the field.

Failing health induced Eustace Sumner to leave New York in 1920, and, after two years in Rhode Island, he brought his wife and two children, Lowell and Margaret (now Mrs. Henri L. Albee), to Pomona, California, in 1922. Shortly following the death of his wife in 1928, he moved to Berkeley. Then began a devoted service to bird banding and thence until his death on October 1, 1943, he gave largely of his energy to ornithology.

In this period, his one aim seemed to be to help and befriend others. He served as President and for several years as Business Manager of the Western Bird-Banding Association, issuing bands for emergency needs, mailing traps and sponsoring permits for beginners. The last two annual indexes for the Condor were prepared by him. He banded birds assiduously in Strawberry Canyon in Berkeley, at his son's ranch in San Mateo County and most recently at the Hastings Natural History Reservation in Monterey County. Outstanding banding records occasionally were reported by him in the Condor and in bird-banding journals, but more importantly, his efforts went into the accumulation of data for extensive reports by Erickson, Blanchard and Linsdale, to cite only a few. If any of us needed birds captured for observation, experimental release or color marking, Sumner willingly lent a hand. Through all this time illness took his strength, but dauntlessly he continued, ever cheerful, illuminated by a fine sense of humor. He was a delightful gentleman.—ALDEN H. MILLER.

Donald Atherton Cohen, a pioneer member of the Cooper Club, died on August 19, 1943, at his farm on Kelly Hill, Hayward, Alameda County, California. Born on April 17, 1870, at Fernside Park, Alameda, he was the son of Alfred A. Cohen, attorney, and Emily (Gibbons) Cohen, daughter of Dr. Henry Gibbons of San Francisco. His father's fifty-room mansion has long been razed and the oak-shaded acres of the home place have become a city park, but where

he loved to see the shorebirds at the water's edge, bird students still meet to watch the migrating flocks swing in to rest and feed.

Educated in New York and Europe, Donald Cohen returned to Alameda to find a business career distasteful. In 1926 he bought a ten-acre ranch, "Mystery Farm," just outside of the town of Hayward, and here he devoted his spare time to increasing his already large collection of study skins, nests, and eggs of birds, presided over by a mounted Condor, with out-stretched wings, which he had bought, freshly-killed, as a boy and had carried down Market Street in San Francisco, slung over the handle bars of his bicycle.

In the 'nineties Donald Cohen's part in Californian ornithology was an active one. His portrait appears on page fourteen, volume one, number one, of "The Osprey," as editor of the "California Department," a section modestly intended to include contributions from all ornithologists living "west of the Rocky Mountains."

When the "Nidiologist" ceased publication, minutes of Cooper Club meetings were officially transferred to the California Department of the Osprey. For a time this was a satisfactory arrangement, but with the migration of the Osprey from New York to Washington, under the management of Elliott Coues, the space allotted to the Cooper Club was sharply cut. This spurred members of the young organization to venture upon the establishment of a magazine of their own—the "Bulletin of the Cooper Ornithological Club," later renamed "The Condor." Donald Cohen served as Northern Division business manager from January, 1899, through January, 1901. His contribution to California ornithology includes some fifty-three titles, the first appearing in 1893, the last, an article on the nesting of Prairie Falcons in the Mount Diablo region, in the Condor for September, 1903.—HILDA W. GRINNELL.

PUBLICATIONS REVIEWED

With the appearance of the second part of Mrs. Nice's life history study on the Song Sparrow (Nice, Margaret Morse. 1943. *Studies in the Life History of the Song Sparrow II: The Behavior of the Song Sparrow and Other Passerines*. Trans. Linn. Soc. N.Y., VI: viii + 328 pp., frontis. + 6 figs.), students of bird behavior are provided with a guide and source of outstanding breadth and significance. Although it is stated in the foreword that this work is "primarily a treatise on the behavior of passerine birds with the Song Sparrow as the chief example," there are numerous references to birds of other orders, some to reptiles, fish, and mammals, and a few even to invertebrates. Seven years' field work on the Song Sparrow, field studies of other pas-

serines, observations of a series of hand-raised birds, and an extensive survey of the literature constitute the background of this book. Mrs. Nice presents many new data, elaborates certain parts of her first volume on the Song Sparrow, and brings together many examples and bits of information of unsuspected value from scattered sources in the abundant ornithological literature. This material is analyzed and interpreted in the light of basic biological principles and fundamental concepts of bird behavior to a degree unmatched by any earlier American avian life history study. Those concepts of behavior developed by Lorenz provide much of the theoretical framework about which the data are organized.

There are twenty-two chapters, each highly organized and divided into numerous parts following a detailed outline in the table of contents. The first introduces basic concepts and viewpoints in the field of bird behavior; important, chiefly contemporary, contributors and their subjects of study are mentioned. The next five chapters take up development of the Song Sparrow in terms of five different stages applicable to passerines at least; activities which make their appearance in the course of these stages are described. There follow discussions of each specific activity, innate and learned behavior, age of fledging and independence, and the young bird after dependence. It is in these chapters that the greater part of the original data is presented; it is here that the greatest contribution of this volume to biology is made. Succeeding chapters dealing chiefly with the Song Sparrow take up society in fall and winter, song, intraspecific relations, and enemy recognition. The remaining chapters are compilations of literature with original data on the Song Sparrow entering more or less secondarily; subjects discussed are awakening and roosting, territory, song in female birds, pair formation, nests and eggs, and care and defense of young. The last chapter on innate and learned behavior in the adult presents interestingly, but too briefly, certain basic implications of this and other correlated studies. There are five appendixes including tables of call-notes and dominance reactions, selected case histories on dominance, mating, and pre-mating behavior of females, and a list of species in which "injury feigning," better termed "distraction display," has been reported. The bibliography, including over 700 titles, provides for students and researchers a fairly comprehensive working list of published papers. Two indexes, one to subjects, the other to species, augment appreciably the usefulness of this book.

The highly organized topical outline mentioned above is carried over into the text, and pages with three or four centered topic headings are not uncommon. This together with an evident effort to economize space and words makes at