

NOTES AND NEWS

Members of the Society are reminded of the Annual Meeting, scheduled for June 14 through 17, 1965, at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Dr. Miklos D. F. Udvardy is Chairman of the Committee on Arrangements. Field trips are planned to lowland, montane, and marine habitats in the vicinity of Vancouver and Victoria.

The University of Minnesota announces the James Ford Bell Delta Waterfowl Fellowship for studies in basic biology of waterfowl. Applications for an award for 1966 should be sent by August 1, 1965, to W. J. Breckenridge, Director, Minnesota Museum of Natural History, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455.

At recent meetings of the divisions of the Cooper Ornithological Society the following papers have been presented: Migration and Ecology of the Yellow Wagtail, by Kai Curry-Lindahl, on November 18, 1964, in Los Angeles; The Behavior of the Chestnut-backed Chickadee, by Laidlaw Williams, on December 3, 1964, in Berkeley; The Effects of Bird Removal on a Population of Native Sparrows, by L. Richard Mewaldt, on January 7, 1965, in Berkeley; The Nature of Isolating Mechanisms in Two Sympatric Species of Meadowlarks, by Laszlo Szijj, on January 27, 1965, in Los Angeles; Feeding Behavior of the Golden-crowned Sparrow under Natural and Altered Photoperiods, by Raymond Marsh, on February 4, 1965, in Berkeley; Worm-finding Behavior in Robins, by Frank Heppner, on March 4, 1965, in Berkeley; Incubation Behavior in Birds, by Gerard P. Baerends, on March 24, 1965, in Los Angeles; The Nesting Shorebirds of Churchill, Manitoba, by Junea W. Kelly, on April 1, 1965, in Berkeley; and Avian Distribution in Southern Oaxaca, by Robert T. Orr, on May 6, 1965, in Berkeley.

The Pacific Nest Record Scheme offers free nest record cards to anyone who wants to contribute field observations to this project which extends throughout the whole Pacific coast region as recently outlined in *The Condor* (vol. 66, 1964:306). The cards, pocket size (4 by 6 inches), can be obtained on request.—PACIFIC NEST RECORD SCHEME, *Department of Zoology, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C.*

PUBLICATIONS REVIEWED

A NEW DICTIONARY OF BIRDS. Edited by Sir A. Landsborough Thompson. McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 928 pp., 48 plates, 16 in color, many figures, 1964; \$17.50.

The appearance of this great dictionary of birds marks the completion of the third of three major projects undertaken by the British Ornithologists' Union to celebrate its Centenary in 1959. Edited by Sir A. Landsborough Thompson, an enormous amount of authoritative information, supplied by 175 eminently qualified experts, has been skillfully integrated into a reference of great value. The list of contributors includes so many eminent scientists that it seems unfair to mention any specifically. It should be noted, however, that Sir Landsborough himself made by far the greatest single contribution, writing 40 signed, major articles and contributing very many shorter, unsigned items throughout.

The articles, arranged alphabetically, cover a huge variety of subjects, ranging from "Omens, Birds as" to "Excretion, Extrarenal," and including just about everything in between. Some indication of the scope of the coverage is afforded by a listing of the general categories included in the most useful "List of Major Articles on General Subjects" (pages 9-12): General, Form and Function, Systematics and Evolution, Distribution and Ecology, Ethology, and Birds and Man. It is evident that a great deal of effort was expended in getting the right contributor for each subject. Mentioning a few names merely to illustrate this point, it is most fitting, and to be expected, that Herbert Friedmann should write on "Honeyguide" and W. H. Thorpe on "Singing." But it is even more impressive that "Bible, Birds of the" should be treated by Professor Aharon Shulov who, in addition to holding other important positions, is Director, Jerusalem Biblical Zoological Garden, and that "Shakespeare's Birds" should be written by Professor Otakar Vočadlo who, in addition to being Professor of English Language and Literature, Caroline University, Prague, was also the editor of the first complete Czech annotated edition of Shakespeare's works. It is obvious that a tremendous amount of effort was expended in ferreting out eminent authorities for each topic, no matter how abstruse.

The entries themselves run from two lines (for example, "Gorget: a band of colour, in some plumage patterns, on the throat or upper breast") to a 12-page treatise on "Singing." Topics of importance (such as Moulting, Musculature, Skeleton, Reproductive System, Nest) are treated in considerable detail. As a result, it is possible to get brief, but very informative, reviews of a wide range of subjects. Appended to many of the entries are brief bibliographies which include at least a few of the major contributions to the topic under consideration.

Such a mass of information on such a diversity of subjects could easily be more cumbersome than useful without adequate systems of reference. Mention has already been made of the "List of Major Articles on General Subjects." This is followed by a "List of Major Articles on Bird Groups," giving the ordinal name, the family name, and the title of the article pertaining to the family. Then follows a "Note on Classification Followed" (that of the Checklist of Birds of the World), a "List of Plates," and a "List of Contributors" (authors, artists, and photographers). The roster of authors includes the titles of the articles for which each is responsible, and for each individual, academic degrees and positions presently and recently held, and it serves as a useful directory for a large group of ornithologists in many parts of

the world. Following the text is an "Index of Generic Names" and, on the last page, measurement conversion tables for the British and metric systems, another indication that every effort was made to increase the usefulness of the dictionary.

The book is well illustrated. In addition to charts, graphs, and diagrams, there are 16 color plates, 14 of them paintings and two pages of color photographs. Each of these illustrations has been carefully chosen to illustrate some point (for example, "Permanent Sexual Dimorphism," "Age Differences in Plumage," "Characteristic African Birds," "Evolutionary Radiation"), so that the color plates accomplish much more than mere window dressing. In addition, there are 32 pages of excellent photographs which are also well chosen to convey pertinent biological information. There are also many small black-and-white text figures portraying examples of the groups of birds discussed in articles. Miss C. E. Talbot Kelly did most of the text figures and five of the color plates as well.

The British Ornithologists' Union is to be congratulated on the completion of this most worthy project, but the real plaudits should be reserved for Sir Landsborough Thompson, whose most able and faithful editorship has produced a work that must be in the library of any serious student of birds.—JOHN DAVIS.