

## INTRODUCTION.

WHILE the immense strides taken by American ornithology during the past score of years has seriously taxed the energies of the amateur to keep within hailing distance, and despite the volume of notes annually published in the various periodicals and books, the demand for complete life histories of even our most familiar birds have not lessened to any great extent. The life of one person would prove far too short to attempt a thorough study of a single species in all its characteristics; hence the absolute necessity for the co-operative work advocated and practiced by the Wilson Ornithological Chapter to obtain results at all satisfactory.

In spite of the devotion of the leisure moments of five years and the generous aid of a large corps of enthusiasts, the frank acknowledgment that the succeeding pages do faint justice to the subject of this paper, is not a matter of discouragement. Nature's Book will always contain fresh and delightful pages for the curious and observant.

Few have any idea of the magnitude of the literature under the title of a single name, and the unavailability of much of it for a work of this kind, because of its fragmentary or negative nature. A realization of the latter has caused the writer to go to the other extreme in frequent cases, with the hope that the mass of detailed information, while it may detract from the general appearance of the paper, will prove useful timber for a more competent builder, or of value for reference.

As far as it was practicable to do so, the compiler has conscientiously striven to place the credit of observations where it belongs, and the quotation marks are used when the exact language is extracted from publications.

All notes have been taken under the name that has held good for almost a century and a half. This, combined with the impossibility of the average student positively identifying any but the extreme types of the subdivided species, has necessi-

tated the present title. Since the difference which exists is purely geographical, the deduction from the value of the paper on this account can scarcely be more than fictitious.

The enumeration of the localities from which notes were taken, together with those represented in the publications examined, is dispensed with for the simple reason that the list would occupy too much space. It is sufficient to state that no considerable section of the habitat of the Flicker is unrepresented.

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