

Publications Reviewed

The Birds of Connecticut. State of Connecticut State Geological and Natural History Survey, Bulletin No. 20. By John Hall Sage, M.S., Secretary of the American Ornithologists' Union, and Louis Bennett Bishop, M.D., Fellow of the American Ornithologists' Union, assisted by Walter Parks Bliss, M.A., Hartford, 1913.

In an Introduction of four and a half pages the location of the state is given, and a glimpse of its topography and faunal areas, which are defined as Alleghenian over the greater part of the state, with a small area of Canadian in the north-western corner, or at least Canadian affinities. We learn that the first definite state list was prepared by Rev. James H. Linsley and published in 1843, the second by Dr. C. Hart Merriam in 1877, and thirty-four years after the first list, while the present list appears after an equal lapse of time. The Introduction closes with a plea for accuracy in making records which can be certainly secured only when specimens of unusual birds are collected. It is clearly shown that such collecting as this entails does not menace the bird life of any region.

In the treatment of the 329 native species known to occur within the borders of Connecticut the names and sequences of the Check-List of the American Ornithologists' Union are followed, but the numbers happily omitted. Divisions are made including orders, suborders, families, subfamilies, the scientific name followed by the vernacular name. There follows a statement of the status of the species in the state, the earliest and the latest seasonal records, breeding records of breeding birds and earliest and latest migration records of transient birds. In the case of unusual or rare occurrence all records are given. A statistical summary shows that the list comprises 80 resident species, 78 summer residents, 38 winter residents, 124 transient visitors, and 80 accidental visitors. There are five introduced species included. The grand total shows 334 for the state, which seems large for so small a state as Connecticut, with practically but one life zone. This may not appear so unlikely when it is known that some 150 persons are named as contributors in one way or another. In a bibliography of 57 pages there appears a further reason why the number of birds recorded in the state is so large. The book closes with about a hundred pages on Economic Ornithology, by Dr. Bishop. The treatment is systematically by groups, but many species are separately treated where their importance warrants such separate treatment. An excellent index adds much to the usefulness of the book. The typography and paper leave little to be desired. As a contribution to

faunal and economic ornithology it is a most welcome addition to our literature, and furnishes a model for similar works in other places. We congratulate the authors. L. J.

Some Birds of the Fresno District, California. By John G. Tyler. The Cooper Ornithological Club. Pacific Coast Avifauna Number 9. Hollywood, October 1, 1913.

This paper makes no claims to completeness, but is rather presented now that it may furnish a working basis for a future complete survey of the region which occupies the exact geographical center of the state. It is a lowland of not over 400 feet elevation, and lies within the Lower Sonoran Zone. The author states that the steady reduction of the swampy areas by drainage marks the doom of such nesting birds as depend upon the cover afforded by such a swampy environment. The check-list of species, which precedes the General Account of the Species, gives 161 species. The treatment is systematic, and each species named is accompanied with copious annotations relating to the occurrences, relative abundance, migration, nesting, food habits, and many side lights upon the life of the birds. We are seldom treated, in a paper of this sort, with such a wealth of interesting things as this author presents. May his tribe increase! In paper, typography, and general appearance this latest number of the California Avifauna series maintains the high standard set at the inception of the series. L. J.

Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections. Three papers by Edgar A. Mearns.

Vol. 61, No. 10. Descriptions of four new African Thrushes of the Genera *Planesticus* and *Geocichla*. August 11, 1913. One is a new species — *Planesticus helleru* — from Mount Mbololo, altitude 4,000 feet, east of Mount Kilimanjaro, British East Africa, collected November 9, 1911, by Edmund Heller, on the Paul J. Rainey African Expedition. The other described forms are subspecies, one of *Planesticus*, the others *Geocichla*.

Vol. 61, No. 11. Descriptions of six new African Birds. August 30, 1913. "Four of the forms here described are from the collection made by the Childs Frick African Expedition, 1911-12; and two are from the Smithsonian African Expedition, 1909-10 collection, made under the direction of Col. Theodore Roosevelt." Five were collected by the author and one by Childs Frick. Five are new subspecies of *Cisticola*, one of *Pyromelana*.

Vol. 61, No. 14. Descriptions of Five New African Weaver-Birds of the Genera *Othyphantes*, *Hypargos*, *Aidemosyne*, and *Lagonosticta*. September 20, 1913. "Four of the forms here described are from the collections made by the Childs Frick African Expedition,

1911-12, and one from the Smithsonian African Expedition collection, 1909-10, under the direction of Col. Theodore Roosevelt." All were collected by the author. Two are new species and three subspecies.

L. J.

Notes on the Occurrence and Nesting of Certain Birds in Rhode Island. By Harry S. Hathaway. Reprinted from *The Auk*, Vol. XXX, No. 4, Oct. 1913.

"During the interval which has elapsed since the publication of the 'Birds of Rhode Island' by Howe and Sturtevant in 1899, and the supplement thereto in 1903, many records of rare and interesting birds have accumulated and are herewith published as a contribution to our knowledge of the avifauna of this state. The Western Willet, Arctic Three-toed Woodpecker, Evening Grosbeak, and Nelson's Sparrow have been added to the list of birds of the state. The Breeding of Henslow's Sparrow, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Pine Warbler, Water-Thrush, Winter Wren, and Hermit Thrush has been established, while an increase in numbers of the Laughing Gull, Common Tern, Sparrow Hawk and Carolina Wren has been noted."

L. J.

THE ONTARIO NATURAL SCIENCE BULLETIN, No. 8, 1913.

In an article entitled "Conditions Against Which Bird Life is Contending, by Mr. Fred Mitchell, the Pileated Woodpecker and Winter Wren are mentioned as having entirely disappeared from the region. The forces mentioned as operating to decrease the bird life are the destruction of forests, the red squirrel, bird dogs allowed to run wild, and the destruction of nests and birds by boys and thoughtless men. A strong plea is made for the establishment of real bird preserves, where the adverse conditions may be reduced to a minimum.

L. J.

BLUE-BIRD, FORMERLY NATURE AND CULTURE.

This much improved Ohio Audubon Monthly, under the editorial management of Dr. Eugene Swope, migrates regularly from 4 West Seventh Street, Cincinnati, Ohio. It is one of the best magazines devoted to the Audubon Society cause. The slight confusion regarding the number of the volume which seems to have been incident to the change of name will doubtless be remedied.

ORNITHOLOGICAL JOURNALS.

The Auk. The July and October issues have appeared since this journal was noticed in these pages. Of the ten articles in the July number the leading article by Witmer Stone, "Bird Migration Rec-

ords of William Bartram, 1802-1822," and "The Nest Life of the Sparrow Hawk," by Althea R. Sherman, are the most noteworthy. Mr. Stone appends a comparative table of arrival dates to show comparisons between Bartram's dates of arrival of 26 common species and the arrivals as noted by the members of the Delaware Valley Ornithological Club. While there are some considerable difference shown in the two records Mr. Stone concludes that there has been appreciable change in the time of arrival. The writer fully agrees with Mr. Stone in his contention that for comparative purposes the arrival of the "bulk" is more likely to yield reliable data. It must also be true that data gathered by a large number of observers in a given region must be more reliable than if records of one or few observers are taken. But after all constant daily study of bird movements by competent observers is the only sure means of securing data of sufficient accuracy to warrant sweeping general conclusions. The station of one observer may be within a definite fly-line, while that of another not many miles away may be wholly without any definite fly-line. The one is pretty certain to obtain earlier dates of arrival than the other. Thus the "personal equation" may be largely a "locality equation." All factors must be considered. The October number contains eight papers, besides the usual long list of interesting and valuable General Notes. Of these eight papers the leading one "A Biological Reconnaissance of Okefinokee Swamp: The Birds," by Albert H. Wright and Francis Harper, with six plates, and "Morning Awakening and Even-song. Second Paper," by Horace H. Wright, are perhaps most worthy of notice. One of the most valuable features of the Auk is the careful and full reviews of recent literature. L. J.

The Condor. Nos. 4 and 5. The leading article of No. 4 is a valuable comparative study of the eggs of the North American Limicolæ, by Dr. R. W. Shufeldt, with six full page half-tone plates representing 25 species. The remarkable similarity in shape and markings of all of the eggs, except those of the three species of Oystercatcher, and their clear dissimilarity both in shape and markings, and their similarity to nests of the Longipennes might afford a legitimate excuse from some questionings in regard to the two groups. Dawson's all-day list at Santa Barbara is a large one, and his prediction, amounting to almost a challenge to the Oberlin region, may warrant comment. It is hardly likely that another all day individual list will be made in the Oberlin region; but that there will be a company list made by as many competent students as can be induced to coöperate, each two doing careful work in some restricted and easily covered area, is as certain as available persons will

make it. In such an all day study Oberlin challenges the world! The leading article of No. 5, by H. S. Swarth, "A Revision of the California Forms of *Pipilo maculatus* Swainson, with Description of a New Subspecies," with a map showing the ranges of the five forms, is a welcome paper on a difficult subject. The new form is *P. maculatus falcinellus*, Sacramento Towhee. This new form occupies the range formerly ascribed to *megalonyx*, which now is shown to belong in the southern part of the state. Mr. J. Grinnell's "Call-notes and Mannerisms of the Wren-Tit" is an intimate study of this wee bird. Other articles and notes maintain the high standard of this magazine of western ornithology.

L. J.

Bird-Lore. Vol. XV, Nos. 4 and 5. The continuation of the color plates of the sparrows and color plates in the Audubon Department adds five excellent color plates to an already long list. In No. 4, the student of faunal ornithology will find the leading article, "The 'Old Man,' A Maine Coast Bird Study," a valuable addition, while students of nesting life will read with pleasure the story of "Five Little Waxwings and How they Grew." The law to protect migratory birds is printed in full. In both numbers the migrations and plumages of the sparrows are continued. No. 5 continues the presentation of intimate studies of birds in most of the articles. In both numbers the "Notes from Field and Study" are well selected and interesting. We regret that space will not permit of a more extended review.

L. J.