

Publications Reviewed

PUBLICATIONS REVIEWED

LIFE HISTORIES OF N. A. GULLS AND TERNS

BY A. C. BENT

The same painstaking care exercised in the preparation of the volume on the Alcidae by the same author is evident in this volume too. If one has Ridgway's Birds of North and Middle America for the purely technical matter and Bent's Life Histories in his library he has indeed all that is necessary to gain a complete knowledge of N. A. birds.

We are glad that the author is courageous and independent enough to voice his own personal opinions, whenever they differ from those of the A. O. U. Committee, based of course on weighty evidence and accurate comparison. Such cases for instance are his treatment of *Larus vegae*, which certainly is not a good species, perhaps not even a sub-species, of *Larus nelsoni* and *Larus barrovianus*. We have stated elsewhere years ago that the question is not always whether some of these alleged differences exist but *whether they are worthy of recognition in nomenclature*. Mr. Bent's views on the status of *Larus brachyrhynchus* have proven true, as the species has subsequently been shown to be only subspecifically distinct from *Larus canus*. His remarks on *Catharacta chilensis* and *Larus fuscus offiuus* are likewise sound.

The photos are fine — the only disappointing one being that of the nest of the Ivory Gull, but perhaps it was the only one to be had. The colored plates are excellent. Altogether Mr. Bent's work is a mine of information and "a joy forever." He richly deserves the gratitude of all working ornithologists and more liberal treatment at the hands of the government in the way of paper stock and cover.

W. F. H.

BIRD BANDING BY MEANS OF SYSTEMATIC TRAPPING *

BY S. PRENTISS BALDWIN

Until Mr. Baldwin made his first report of progress at one of the A. O. U. meetings upon the work that he was doing in trapping and banding, some of us were becoming skeptical about whether the small returns from bird banding as it had been practiced up to that time was worth the cost in time and money. But here was a method which brought results. It opened a field for research which promised large returns, even if pursued independently, but pursued in coöperation with others promised results of inestimable value in the study not only of migration but also of features of the life history of the birds. Mr. Baldwin's banding operations occupied the summer and autumn months at Gates Mill, Ohio, and the late winter months at Thomasville, Georgia, for the years 1914 to 1918; but he is continuing this work at both places since this report was published. The writer has had

the pleasure of visiting the scene of operation at Gates Mill, Ohio, and studying with Mr. Baldwin the actual operations. There is no secret about it. Now that Mr. Baldwin has pointed the way anyone with a fair knowledge of the bird species and an interest in the work sufficient to continue it even when it may cause some inconvenience, can do it and obtain fascinating results. Even one trap is worth operating, but two or three will bring more results. The traps are not expensive, and they will last your lifetime if they are given reasonable care. The writer would like to have north and south lines of bird banders established across Ohio. One natural route would be the Cuyahoga and Muskingum rivers line, another the Sandusky-Scioto rivers line, and still another the Maumee-Miami rivers line. Then there ought also to be lines between these so that any lateral movements could be detected. It is probably true that the largest returns would be wholly local, but there would probably also be satisfactory returns from other trapping and band operations in each line. Any persons who are interested in this kind of work will find Mr. Baldwin entirely willing to give such advice and directions as will help the campaign along. Write him at the Williamson Building, Cleveland, Ohio.

L. J.

*Abstract of the Proceedings of the Lincoln Society of New York. For the year ending March 11, 1919. No. 31, 1918-1919. Issued Dec. 23, 1919.