

PUBLICATIONS REVIEWED

Birds of the New York City Region. By Ludlow Griscom, Assistant Curator of Ornithology, American Museum of Natural History, with the coöperation of the Linnæan Society of New York. Published by the Museum. 1923.

There are six colored plates (Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Goldfinch, Scarlet Tanager, Tufted Titmouse, Wood Thrush) from the National Association of Audubon Societies, thirty text figures in black and white, and an excellent map of the region. The Introduction of 51 pages treats of Area Included, Life-Zones, Seasonal Variation in Bird-Life, Migrations and Movements of Local Birds, Local Regions, The Local Collection, Changes in Bird-Life, and Bibliography of Useful Literature. Then follows the Annotated List of Local Birds, covering 326 pages, in which 299 species are treated, and this is followed by an Appendix that discusses Extinct and Extirpated Species, Introduced Species, Hypothetical List, a short Errata, and a complete Index. On the technical side the book is marked by the absence of trinomials except where they are essential for clearness, and by lack of consistency in the use of the hyphen in the vernacular names. Thus it is Yellowlegs in the text, but Yellow-legs in the index; Whip-poorwill in the text and Whip-poor-will in the Index. But this is a minor matter, especially when one recalls that the average printer's compositor is possessed of an enormous inertia when scientific matter is put into type.

The material which the book contains has been selected with great care for accuracy of records—it is a model in this respect. The author states that "The object of this Handbook is to render the existing information about local birds readily accessible. Its subtitle might well be: 'Our Local Birds, when and where to find them,' as these are the first questions anyone interested wants to have answered." And while he goes on to say that how to recognize the birds is outside the province of this book he does give in the text most helpful suggestions about the things to look for in species that are hard to recognize in the field. In some cases it would have added much to the certainty of identification if the author had mentioned the particular places that certain species could be found. Thus, in Ohio there is never any danger of confusing the Alder Flycatcher with the Acadian, because the one is always found in swampy regions, while the other is always found in the beech and maple woods. But this book is a valuable contribution to the ornithological literature outside of the region that it is particularly concerned with.

L. J.

The Baltimore Oriole and a Biographical Sketch of Audubon. By Raphael Semmes Payne. Baltimore. The Norman, Remington Company. 54 pages. Price one dollar.

The colored frontispiece is a duplicate of the colored picture of the Baltimore Oriole, both on the protecting cover and the outside front cover of the book. In all of the pictures the color is chrome yellow instead of orange. Facing page 12 there is a half-tone picture of a nest,

and facing page 20 a black and white picture of the Baltimore Oriole, "Designed from Audubon's beautiful pictorial." The reviewer does not have access to Audubon's own description of this bird, but he wonders if the statement attributed to Audubon at the bottom of page 16 of this little book may not be wrongly quoted. "They lay from four to six eggs, and in the far South near two brooks"! While the book does not seem to the reviewer to present any new matter relating to either the bird in question or to the known biography of the illustrious ornithologist and naturalist, it is written in a pleasing manner, in large clear type and excellent workmanship.

We also wonder if the "local historian, well versed in the lore of the neighborhood," knew that the male oriole wears the brighter colors. Most writers seem to agree that the larger share of the construction of the nest is done by the female.

L. J.