

Dr. Stephens gave a brief report of the meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union at Pittsburgh in November; but the report of the Wilson Ornithological Club was omitted because of the absence of Mr. Spiker. Miss Kathleen M. Hempell, of Elkader, sent an interesting paper on her experiences in banding birds, which was read by the Secretary.

As part of his introduction of Dr. Weeks, Mr. Rosen read an original poem on the Goldfinch, which was very clever and much enjoyed. Dr. Leroy Titus Weeks, of Emmetsburg, presented a paper on "Birds of Sixty Years Ago", which contained recollections of the Passenger Pigeon, Long-billed Curlew, Whooping Crane, Sandhill Crane, and Swallow-tailed Kite.

The afternoon session opened with a business meeting, which included reports of committees and election of officers. The following officers were elected: President, W. M. Rosen, Ogden; Vice-President, T. C. Stephens, Sioux City; Secretary, Mary L. Bailey, Sioux City; Treasurer, Thos. H. Whitney, Atlantic; Executive Council, Dr. Leroy Titus Weeks, Prof. Homer R. Dill, and Mr. A. J. Palas.

Mr. T. H. Whitney then gave a paper describing his experiences with the Purple Martin. This paper was published in the June issue of the WILSON BULLETIN, as was also the one by Miss Hempel. Mr. John J. Cole, of Nevada, discussed the relation of birds to agriculture, using lantern slides. A paper entitled "The Birds' Garden", by Mr. Weir R. Mills, of Pierson, was an intimate study of the birds of a village home lot in which over a hundred species have been recorded. Mrs. Henry Frankel, of Des Moines, told of her attempts and success in interesting school children in birds. Mr. A. J. Palas, of Des Moines, gave an interesting account of his study of birds during a summer spent in Colorado. The meeting closed with a second talk by Dr. Weeks, for which he chose the subject, "The Garden of Eden".

Several papers given on the preceding day in the program of the Iowa Conservation Association were of interest to bird students. Dr. H. C. Oberholser, of Washington, discussed some general principles of wild life protection. Dr. T. C. Stephens, of Sioux City, read a paper on "Recent Steps For and Against the Conservation of Wild Life". Mr. Arthur Goshorn, of Winterset, gave reminiscences of hunting experiences on "A Willow Bar" in the Missouri River, covering a number of years. Mr. Walter W. Bennett, of Sioux City, gave the evening talk on "Island Bird Life", illustrated by many beautifully colored slides from photographs made by himself in the various bird colonies of North Dakota. He also exhibited several reels of motion pictures of the White Pelican and other birds. Those who attended these meetings felt highly repaid, and we hope others will join us next year.

MRS. MARY L. BAILEY, *Secretary, I. O. U.*

PUBLICATIONS REVIEWED

LIFE HISTORIES OF NORTH AMERICAN WILD FOWL. ORDER ANSERES (PART). By Arthur Cleveland Bent. Bulletin 130, United States National Museum, pp. i-x+1-376. Washington, D. C., 1925.

This publication continues and completes the consideration of the life histories of our North American wild fowl (*Anseres*) that was begun in Bulletin 126 of the U. S. National Museum (1923), and which included the species num-

bered 129 to 150 in the A. O. U. Check-List, or from the mergansers to the Ring-necked Duck. The present bulletin treats of A. O. U. Nos. 151 to 181, or our two goldeneyes, the Buffle-head, Old-squaw, Harlequin and Labrador Ducks, the eiders and scoters, the Ruddy and Masked Ducks, and the geese, tree-ducks and swans. These two bulletins on our wild fowl in turn follow treatments of the petrels and pelicans and their allies (*Tubinares* and *Steganopodes*), the gulls and terns (*Longipennes*) and the diving birds (*Pygopodes*), which appeared, respectively, as Bulletins 121 (1922), 113 (1921) and 107 (1919) of the U. S. National Museum. Reviews of Bulletins 107 and 113, by W. F. Henninger, have already appeared in the WILSON BULLETIN (xxxI, pp. 100-101 and xxxiii, p. 201).

There is no substantial departure in this last part of Mr. Bent's splendid work from the general plan of arrangement and the high standard of excellence of its four predecessors. As in the previous parts, Mr. Bent quotes copiously from the published writings and unpublished notes of many other competent ornithologists, wherever these are pertinent, skillfully weaving these quotations by extensive original interpolations into complete and most interesting biographies of each of the species treated. It is difficult to imagine any more pleasing, accurate and instructive ornithological reading than is to be found in this work, and the reader is gratified at the wise action of the Council of the A. O. U. in 1923 in awarding to its deserving author the second medal and honorarium under the Brewster Memorial Fund.

In the first two parts of this work Mr. Bent adopted the nomenclature of the third (1910) edition of the A. O. U. Check-List without any changes, but in the last two parts, as well as the present one, though following the sequence of the Check-List as far as possible, he has departed from its nomenclature in several cases where such a departure seemed necessary to reflect the advance of ornithological science during the past fifteen years. In the two parts dealing with the *Anseres*, Drs. C. W. Richmond and H. C. Oberholser have assumed responsibility with Mr. Bent for the scientific names used, which are in several cases at variance with those used in the Check-List and its supplements. Following Miller (*Auk*, xxxiii, pp. 278-281), the subgenus *Melanitta*, including the White-winged Scoters, has been elevated to generic rank and extended to include the Surf Scoter, and following Oberholser (*Auk*, xxxvi, p. 562), the subgenus *Exanthemops*, including the Ross's Goose, has also been elevated to generic rank. The supposed western subspecies of White-winged Scoter described by W. S. Brooks in 1915 as *dixoni*, and accepted by the A. O. U. Committee in the Eighteenth Supplement, is not recognized by Mr. Bent.

But it is in the nomenclature of the geese that we find the most changes as a result of recent studies. Following Swarth and Bryant (1917), Mr. Bent regards our common White-fronted Goose as identical with the European bird, and the subspecific name *gambelli*, so long used to designate a supposed western American subspecies of wide distribution, is restricted to a large form found wintering in California, which is called the Tule Goose. In his treatment of the four so-called subspecies of *Branta canadensis*, a group that has excited considerable controversy of late, Mr. Bent, having no important new evidence to submit, wisely follows the A. O. U. Check-List arrangement, which has been well defended by Swarth. However, he indicates an inclination to follow Figgins in the opinion that *minima* is specifically distinct from *canadensis*, though apparently not fol-

lowing him in the opinion that *occidentalis* and *hutchinsi* are hybrids between *minima* and *canadensis*. Following Hartert (1917), the American Brant is regarded as subspecifically identical with the European Brant, from which it has been separated for years as subspecies *glaucogastra*, and, again following Hartert (1920), the Black Brant (*nigricans*), which has been considered a distinct species, is regarded as a subspecies of the Brant. Mr. Bent includes the Bean Goose (*Anser fabialis*) as North American, but the propriety of this has been recently questioned by Mr. Jourdain (*Auk*, xlii, p. 173).

In the vernacular names Mr. Bent follows the A. O. U. Check-List consistently, except that, in conformity with a sensible usage that is rapidly growing in popularity, he drops the possessive form where the name is derived from that of a person (e. g., Ross Goose and Hutchins Goose, not Ross's Goose and Hutchins's Goose), and also inclines to a less extensive hyphenation (e. g., Bufflehead and Oldsquaw, not Buffle-head and Old-squaw). He also uses the modifying word American with names of forms which have close representatives in the Old World. With all of these practices the reviewer finds himself in most complete sympathy.—M. H. S.

THE BIRDS OF YELLOWSTONE PARK. By Milton P. Skinner. Roosevelt Wild Life Bulletin. Vol. III, No. 1. Pp. 1-189. February, 1925.

We have in this bulletin the most complete account of the birds of the Yellowstone which has thus far appeared. It is written in narrative style for the special use of the tourist who may not have much knowledge of birds. But at the same time it will prove both entertaining and useful to any bird student who may not be familiar with the western birds. It will certainly facilitate the finding and identification of the birds in the Park by the tourist whose time is limited.

Each ecological area of the Park is separately discussed with respect to its bird life; thus, "Birds of the Forests"; "Birds of the Brooks and Rivers"; "The Bird Life at Mammoth Hot Springs"; etc., etc. There is an interesting account of the influences of warm springs and gas vents on birds. Here we learn that there are certain dangers for birds in the gases emitted from the earth. The section on the White Pelican is a valuable summary of our knowledge of the life history of this species. Following the narrative account we find a useful table of field identification marks for all of the common species, which we believe will be of great help to all novices in bird study. There is also a complete list of the birds of the Park, including all of the rarer ones, and numbering 202 species. Other features are a bibliography of papers dealing with the birds of the Yellowstone; two black and white maps of the Park, one geographical, the other showing the life zones; and an index. Forty-seven half-tone reproductions of photographs, and four colored plates of birds by E. J. Sawyer embellish the work. The artistic work of Mr. Sawyer is particularly pleasing.

From the author's style in the beginning of his narrative the uninformed reader might get the impression that the story is written up from a single trip or visit to the Park; so it may be said that Mr. Skinner has lived in the Park for many years, and doubtless has a fuller acquaintance with its wild inhabitants than any other living person. Such papers as this one must be considered of distinct service to the public, provided they are made easily available, and we congratulate Dr. Adams on the splendid series which he has thus far put out.—T. C. S.