

BOOK REVIEWS

A NEW BOOK ON FISHES.—An important event to those interested in any way in the study of fishes is the publication of "A History of Fishes," by J. R. Norman. (Ernest Benn Ltd., London, 1931, 28s.). Mr. Norman is in charge of the fish collection of the British Museum (Natural History). The results of the latest advances in almost every phase of ichthyological and fisheries research are included in the discussion of the various aspects of fish life, such as form, locomotion, respiration, fins, scales, venom, electricity, light, sound, nervous system, colouration, conditions of life, distribution, migration, breeding, courtship, parental care, development, classification, taxonomy, etc. The relation of fishes to man is discussed under such headings as fisheries, fishing methods, fishery research and even fish mythology. The matter is presented in language intelligible to the average educated layman. The book is an important contribution to ichthyology and no doubt will prove indispensable to those engaged in any branch of that science.

COMMON PESTS. *How to Control some of the Pests that Affect Man's Health, Happiness and Welfare.* By Rennie W. Doane. Charles C. Thomas, Publisher, Springfield and Baltimore, 1931.

The book before us is one of a series of "Nature Books" edited by Dr. Hartley H. T. Jackson. It includes within its 384 pages descriptions of a multitude of creatures beginning with scorpions and ending with mammals and birds. The work is divided into two sections, the first entitled: Pests of Man and Domestic Animals; the second: Insect Control and Some Important Pests of the Orchard, Garden, Field and Household. Under section One we find the following chapter headings: I. Some near Relations of Insects; II. Blood-sucking Flies; III. Mosquitoes and their Control; IV. Mosquitoes and Disease; V. Flesh-flies, Screw Worm Flies and Bot Flies; VI. House Flies and Disease; VII. Bedbugs, Lice and Fleas; VIII. Parasitic Worms.

Section Two contains: IX. Control of Insect Pests; X. Insect Pests of the Orchard; XI. Citrus Pests; XII. Insect Pests of Berries; XIII. Insect Pests of Grapes; XIV. Insect Pests of Field Crops; XVI. Insect Pests of Shade and Forest Trees and Lumber; XVII. Flower Garden Pests; XVIII. Greenhouse Pests; XIX. Insects Infesting

Mills, Store rooms and Houses; XX. Mammals as Pests; XXI. Birds as Pests.

The book is evidently intended as an elementary text book for the average individual who is not versed in the habits and control of the commoner pests with which he might be expected to come in contact. In this object it will serve a useful purpose and we feel, on the whole, that the author is to be commended on the results achieved.

It was to be expected, in a work of this scope, that there would be some regrettable omissions and that there might be disagreement as to the wisdom of the selections made. The first point which will strike a Canadian reader is that the author was either unfamiliar with the insect conditions north of the international boundary or that he intended the book for use only in the United States.

One of the most serious defects of the book is that it appears to have been compiled from sources which, in many instances, are out of date. We note for example that no mention is made of the part played by black flies in the transmission of a blood parasite of poultry, nor of nicotine sulphate for destroying biting lice. The recent great progress made in the use of pyrethrum powder for the control of fleas and many other insects is overlooked. Arsenate of lime, now one of the most widely used insect poisons, is scarcely recognized, and derris, now recommended for the destruction of warble flies, is not even mentioned. The recommendations for grasshopper control include the use of the long discarded "hopper dozer"; the description of the egg habitats is also misleading. Cutworms and armyworms are discussed together as if all had similar habits, which, of course, they have not, while the pale western cutworm, one of the principal scourges of grain crops in the Great Plains region, is not even mentioned, nor indeed is the wheat-stem sawfly or the bertha armyworm.

The chapters on mammals and birds are less open to criticism and they add not a little to the interest of the book. We have yet, however, to discover any evidence to support the oft repeated claim that weasels "suck blood" while the "lust to kill," so frequently credited to these and other predators, is in reality based on a desire to obtain food for future use which in a great majority of cases is actually stored away in much the same

manner as a squirrel stores nuts.

The book is well printed and the illustrations, on the whole, are good.—N.C.

ATTUNE WITH SPRING IN ACADIE by Claire Harris MacIntosh, Introduction by F. Schyler Mathews. Illustrated by Marjorie Hugson Tozer. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York; London, 1932. Quarto, pp. 106, 8 full page coloured plates and many small black and white crayon drawings. Price, \$3.00.

A book of child's verse reduced to child's mentality. It treats of some common Nova Scotian birds in humanistic manner but so does Mother Goose, and if it achieves a tithe of the success of that classic its future is assured. Most of the lines run with a merry jingle and their presentation of specific character is sympathetic to childhood ideals if not to those of science. Included are five bird songs (words and music), or rather songs about birds in which the natural songs are woven into the themes. At the back of the volume are several lists of the land birds of Nova Scotia grouped in various convenient ways. The volume is nicely got up with dainty cardboard case and bound in pale blue pictured boards. It makes an attractive gift book and may turn the thoughts of many youngsters birdways.—P.A.T.

A bulletin entitled "Water Fowl in Relation to the Spawning of Herring in British Columbia," the authors of which are J. A. Munro, Chief Federal Migratory Bird Officer for the Western Provinces; and W. A. Clemens, Director of the Pacific Biological Station, has been published under the auspices of the Biological Board of Canada.

The report comprises 12 sections. There is a short (1) Introduction, the joint production of the two authors, and the gist of the article purports to be an answer to its opening words which are these:—"There is an increasing tendency on the part of both commercial fishermen and anglers to attribute in some degree the depletion of the stocks of many food and game fishes to the activities of certain bird species."

The introduction is followed by a (2) Topographical sketch of the region of which the article treats, viz.:—Departure Bay and adjacent waters, and an outline of the (3) Life history of the Pacific herring (*Clupea pallasii*) by W. A. Clemens.

Subsequent to these, four sections are devoted to the question of to what extent aquatic birds prey upon the herring or its ova, by J. A. Munro.

These are entitled, (4) Species of gulls concerned, (5) The capture of herring gulls, (6) The consumption of herring ova by gulls, and (9) Observations of other water fowl. Here the reviewer would say that this work presents itself to him as being very thoroughly done. Section nine reveals exceedingly close observation, portraying much of the general habits of these aquatic birds, and this beyond the question of to what extent they devour the ova of herring, while the account is very systematic and easy to read. Furthermore, stomach contents of numbers of species, viz.:—of a murrelet, a guillemot, a murre, and various cormorants and ducks, have been analyzed and are now published.

The remaining sections are by the two authors jointly, and are entitled: (7) Stomach contents of gulls collected at Departure Bay, B.C., which comprises a series of tables presenting, apparently, an exhaustive analysis of the contents: (8) Contents of gull pellets: (10) Destruction of herring ova by ducks, which contains a criticism of an article in *Trans. Roy. Can. Inst. on *Clupea pallasii** by Dr. C. McLean Fraser: (11) Summary and conclusions: and (12) Acknowledgments.

The bulletin is illustrated with seven figures, viz.:—(1) Departure Bay area, which is a map of that bay and its vicinity: (2) Eggs of herring on seaweed: (3) Gulls on beach at Departure Bay: (4) Glaucous-winged Gulls near Nanoose Bay: (5) Regurgitated pellets of the Glaucous-winged Gull—natural size: (6) Regurgitated pellets of the same—one-third natural size: and (7) Surf Scoters in flight, Nanoose Bay.

The authors are to be commended on the production of this report. It reveals a thorough study and is admirably done. They present the data as they ascertained them to be through observation and their research work, yet they are careful in drawing conclusions and cautiously state:—"In such studies collaboration between ichthyologists and ornithologists is necessary in order that identifications may be authoritative and observations correctly interpreted." Still in a careful perusal of the report it may be discerned that in the judgment of the authors, man is the chief cause of the depletion of species; and in this judgment the reviewer concurs. Until the white man entered upon the scene there were far more birds of certain kinds, and also far more fishes of certain kinds, than there are to-day, so that unquestionably the depletion is attributable to man; for nature being no respecter of species, ever seeks, under natural competition, to maintain the balance among living creatures.—ANDREW HALKETT.



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