

mountains ascended were: Marmot Mountain at the head of the west fork; Heather Mountain on the south side of the west fork; the mountains to the west and to the east of Heather Mountain (names unknown); the divide between the west and north forks and a mountain on the south side of the north fork, where there is a tributary stream from the east, which we named Goat Mountain as it was here we saw goats. No signs were observed on any of the other mountains climbed.

"We climbed Goat Mountain on the side facing north which we found difficult to ascend. Near the top we were greatly encouraged by finding fresh goat droppings and later some goat hair attached to bushes. Farther on we saw fresh tracks near water and finally two goats, one of which was feeding in full view about 500 yards distant. This animal was under observation for half an hour. From the number of tracks and signs observed it would seem that the original stock of four animals has increased. Goat Mountain is very precipitous and travelling is difficult. The portion on which the goats were feeding was inaccessible to us.—J. A. MUNRO.

STRANGE BEHAVIOUR OF LEWIS' WOODPECKER.—Last summer (1932), I was informed by my nephew, who is a keen student of birds, that he had seen a Lewis's Woodpecker in flight carrying in its claws a short-tailed field mouse (*Microtus townsendi*), that it dropped the mouse, swooped down and caught it again before it reached the ground, dropped it a second time on to the ground

and abandoned it through fear of my nephew who had come running up to investigate.

The mouse looked as if it had been dead for some time and probably had not been killed by the bird but was being taken to feed the nestlings in a dead poplar close by. My nephew is quite positive that it carried the mouse in its claws which seems an extraordinary feat for a woodpecker. But then Lewis's Woodpecker is given to abnormal habits as I have often found to my cost when sometimes in the fall they suddenly begin to raise havoc with my apples and plums and can only be stopped by extermination.—JOHN RONAYNE, Pemberton, British Columbia.

A SHELL NEW TO THE CANADIAN LIST.—*Valvata perdepressa walkeri* was described by Dr. Frank Collins Baker in 1930 (*The Molluscan Fauna of the Southern Part of Lake Michigan and Its Relationship to Old Glacial Lake Chicago*). Trans. Ill. State Acad. of Sci. 22:188, 1930) and specimens were presented by Dr. Baker to the National Museum of Canada in 1932 (Cat. No. Mollusca 3229). On comparing some unidentified *Valvatas* from Lake Erie at Kingsville, I found that they agreed very well with *V. perdepressa walkeri*. Specimens were sent to Dr. Baker who confirms my identification. *Valvata perdepressa walkeri* Baker should therefore be added to the Canadian list.

This variety has been recorded as *V. bicarinata* in most publications referring to Lake Erie. It is a small shell with a low spire, and at first sight looks very much like a *Gyraulus*. For a description and figures of the variety, see the paper quoted above.—A. LA ROCQUE.

## BOOK REVIEWS

THE BIRDS OF MINNESOTA BY DR. T. S. ROBERTS, *Illustrated with ninety-two colour plates by Allan Brooks, George Miksch Sutton, Walter Alois Weber, Francis Lee Jaques, Walter John Breckenridge, including one plate by the late Louis Agassiz Fuertes. 606 text figures, pp. 691 plus 821. The University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1932. 2 Vols., Quarto. Price \$6.00. A limited edition de luxe is also issued at \$25.00.*

An extensive introduction pp. 135, contains an historical review of the birds of Minnesota and descriptions of the state's geography, physiography, life-zones and climate, synopses of bird-life past and present and at various seasons, tables of arrivals and departures, progress of conservation, bird-songs and calls, bird-banding and general discussion of state ornithological problems. The

main body of the work, pp. 135-691 and 1-455, consists of a Systematic Account of all the birds found in the state, defining their status, distribution and much life-history. The remainder of the second volume is taken by artificial keys, minutely described plumage descriptions, Bibliography and Index. The plates are bound together at the backs of their respective volumes.

The present generation of rising ornithologists and popular bird observers is particularly fortunate. This reviewer did not come upon the scene very early, but he can remember that his only book of reference was a much-thumbed and dog's-eared copy of Cook's *Birds of Michigan* without descriptive matter and illustrated with small, worn wood-cuts that had served their turn in many a similar publication. Other books were heard of, occasionally seen, always coveted



but practically unobtainable. Passing glimpses of the lithographic illustrations in some of the Pacific Railroad Reports suggested resources available to real ornithologists, but, alas, treated of species beyond our knowledge and experience. Fisher's Hawks and Owls was the first book with coloured illustrations of familiar species that fell to our hand and was the pride of our library.

But times have changed. Where once we looked vainly for bird information, now it is produced on every hand, superbly illustrated by artist-ornithologists and at prices absurdly low. This has been made possible by reproductive processes that were unheard of then but also much credit must be given to the general awakening of popular interest in the subject and the benevolence of enlightened legislatures, institutions and philanthropic individuals that have absorbed the expenses of production and presented results to the world near, or even below, cost.

Robert's *Birds of Minnesota* is the present peak of sumptuous regional bird books. Beginning with Eaton's *Birds of New York*, a succession of super-illustrated and sympathetically written bird books has been produced, each being, in one direction or another, some little advance on the last. What the next will be is difficult to prophesy as this seems to be the practical limit of general edition popular books. Owing to the close neighbourhood of Minnesota to western Ontario and Manitoba the work will be of particular interest to those provinces and a much wider field of Canada can obtain great profit from it.

The text matter has been gathered through many years of Dr. Robert's active life and is a monument to his enthusiasm and energy in field and study. His experience as a teacher and lecturer has well prepared him to present his material agreeably and adequately for the amateur to whose needs the work is principally directed. Scattered through the text are many line cuts of enlightening details and photographs of birds and their habitats. The half-tones have necessitated a well-coated paper throughout that has made the volumes rather heavy for casual reference and constitute the only grounds for criticism of format. The reviewer has detected but one serious error in the two volumes. On pages 210 and 211 the two smaller Canada Geese have been unfortunately transposed. The goose to which the name "Hutchins's" has now to be attached is not the middle-sized one as formerly but the minute fellow that has often been confused with *minima* of the west coast. It was to prevent this very misunderstanding that the name "Richardson's" was proposed in the vernacular for the little goose to which the inflex-

ible rules of nomenclature the scientific term *hutchinsi* has to be applied.

The coloured illustrations are full-paged seven-colour offset instead of the usual four-colour direct process. The additional printings give better colour reproduction and compensate for slight inaccuracies of registration so difficult to maintain in run of press. The off-set process allows the use of a soft-grained paper instead of a hard shiny one and the whole result is greatly superior in accuracy, delicacy of colour and artistic appeal to the illustrations of any similar bird-book that has appeared before. The detail in which reproduction most apparently fails is in the occasional hand corrections that have been made on the plates, particularly the black plate. It is perhaps too much to demand of the plate-etcher the same technical and artistic knowledge that we find in the original artist but perhaps some day process work will arrive at a fool-proof stage where reproduction is mechanically perfect and no foreign hand need come between the artist and his pictures.

The work of the various artists is sufficiently represented to invite comparisons. Each has been faced in numerous cases with the necessity of placing a number of birds on the same sheet. It is interesting to note the various ways in which this "happy family" arrangement has been handled. Probably the most satisfactory solution of the difficulty is that adopted in some of Brook's plates by scattering in well balanced masses and harmonious colourings, small vignettes over a tinted background without drawing them together in a single composition. An admirable example of this is Plate 14 of Accipters. Of course, in comparision of work, Brook's long experience with brush and in the field tells heavily and there is no doubt but that he divides the honours of excellence with the late lamented Fuertes. Perhaps no one will ever draw birds with a finer feeling or greater accuracy than the the latter, but Brooks excells in his background and general pictorial handling, and the purity and transparency of his skies and water is remarkable. The work of Jaques is of a very high order and with charming Japanese simplicity and purity of colour. Some of his pates, as No. 25, of Pheasants, are about as fine as anything we have seen in bird illustration. It is evident that as an artist he has taken long strides ahead. We note that he gives the Green Heron red legs and feet. If this is a character of Minneosta birds it is interesting for none of the birds of this species that we are acquainted with have these members other than greenish-yellow.

Sutton's work is satisfactory, but it is unfair to



judge him by the pictures here presented. His subjects are the dull and artistically uninspiring *Empidonaces* and Vireos and he has had to crowd his sheets. From other work of his it is evident that he is advancing rapidly and if he so continues will accomplish much. Weber is practically a new brush in general bird illustration but here makes a very promising bow of introduction to the public. He is a brilliant colourist and seems to have studied Brooks to advantage without being an imitator. He appears to know his birds and, though the plums of assignment do not fall to his share and he has had to work on

crowded sheets, we should say that when he overcomes a little hardness of treatment he will paint himself a future. On the other hand Breckenridge paints soft, perhaps with too dry a brush. When experience gives him more boldness and decision much may be expected of him.

Altogether Dr. Roberts, his assistants and the friends who have made this magnificent publication possible at a price within the reach of all are to be heartily congratulated on having produced a work that may long be a standard to aim at in similar future publications.—P.A.T.

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