

BOOK NOTICES.

BIRDS OF NEW YORK.—By Elon Howard Eaton. Part 2, General Chapters; Land Birds. New York State Museum, Albany, N.Y., Memoir 12.

In the June, 1910, issue of THE OTTAWA NATURALIST, we noted the appearance of Part 1, a volume of 390 pages, of the Birds of New York, which volume discussed the Water Birds and Game Birds. Part 2, as above mentioned treats of the Land Birds and is truly a magnificent contribution to American ornithology. It is a much larger volume, consisting of 543 pages. In Part 1, there are 42 full paged coloured plates, whereas in Part 2, there are no less than 106.

With the presentation of Part 2, the entire field of work as originally planned by the author is covered. Students of birds everywhere will be delighted at the completion of this exhaustive memoir. The coloured plates, which are from drawings by Mr. Louis Agassiz Fuertés, are indeed excellent in every way.

The introductory charter of Part 2 discusses Bird Ecology (pp. 5-46.) This is followed by a chapter on The Economic Value of Birds (pp. 46-51.) In the author's own words "the main value of birds is in holding tree and crop enemies in check. Modern methods of fighting injurious insects seem, in some cases, to render the aid of birds unnecessary, but the special value of the bird's work consists in attacking insect pests which are not reached by poison spray and at seasons of the year when spraying is not practised, thereby preventing outbreaks which otherwise would cause great destruction and expense." In this chapter the value of birds as weed seed destroyers is also discussed. Other chapters which follow are "The Status of our Bird Laws," "Special Measures for Increasing Bird Life," "Bird Refugees" and "Private Preserves." These are all of extreme interest. Then follows the main portion of the work, viz., the description of genera and species of the land birds. This occupies pages 61-541. Many text figures appear in this part. The Birds of Prey are first treated of. Each species is discussed under sub-headings, such as description, distribution, habits, etc. These are followed by an account of the Paroquet, the Cuckoos, Kingfishers, etc., the Woodpeckers, the Swifts, etc., etc., until a complete treatment of the land birds is given.

Canadian students will indeed welcome the final part of this magnificent work on the Birds of New York. The New York State Museum is to be congratulated in issuing such a beautiful and useful memoir. To the author every credit is due for the final appearance in such delightful form of years of labour. The plates by the well known artist, Mr. Fuertés, will certainly be admired by all bird lovers. The cost of issuing such volumes is, of course, extremely high and for this reason personal copies will be expensive and possibly difficult to obtain. The chief public libraries, however, in Canada should endeavor to obtain these two volumes for use in their reference reading rooms. Owing to the large number of persons interested in our native birds there would undoubtedly be many applications for the use of the books.


A. G.

HANDBOOK OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS PARK MUSEUM.—By Harlan I. Smith. Canada, Department of the Interior, Dominion Parks Branch.

This very useful handbook of 126 pages has recently been received. It has been prepared with the intention of giving to the public now a reference guide to the natural history of the whole region in and around the Rocky Mountains Park, at Banff, Alta. In Chapter 1, on the "Geography of the Rocky Mountains Park, a list of the important mountains, with their altitude is given, as well as a list of the living animals in the Zoo and the Paddock. Under Chapter 2 on Mammals," the different species are discussed in an interesting manner. Chapter 3 treats of the Birds, Chapter 4 the Fishes; Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8 discuss Reptiles, Amphibians, Shellfish and Insects. These latter chapters are brief and do not mention any of the species. Chapter 9 describes many of the Trees found in the Park. Chapter 10, on "Minerals," 11, on "Rocks," and 12, on "Fossils" are also brief. Chapter 13 is on "Weather," 14 on "Antiquities," 15 on "Indians" 16 on "History" and 17 on "Literature of the Rocky Mountains Park."

The handbook will doubtless be well received by many visitors to the Banff Museum and Park.

A. G.





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The Ottawa naturalist 28(7), 94-95.

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