

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

A Preliminary Review of the Birds of Nebraska, with synopses. By Lawrence Bruner, Robert H. Wolcott, Myron H. Swenk.

While this long promised "Birds of Nebraska" comes to us as a "Preliminary Review," and therefore much different in character from what one might be led to expect, seems to be well adapted to its avowed purpose, "A Working List." While it is preliminary in character, the claim of the authors that it "is believed to represent exactly the state of our knowledge at the present day." seems to be borne out by an examination of the list of species and annotations. The book is really a series of artificial keys, each key followed by an annotated list of the species covered by that key. The keys are intended for work with the specimen in hand, and to the writer's mind, will prove somewhat difficult to those unfamiliar with this method of identification. They belong to the older, rather than the newer system. However, properly used, they will identify. There is a complete index, but we miss a summary of any sort. Such a summary as we find in "The Birds of Colorado," would be a valuable addition. The book is bound in cloth and makes a very welcome and valuable addition to faunal literature.

L. J.

North American Fauna. No. 23. November 24, 1904. A Biological Reconnaissance of the Base of the Alaska Peninsula. By Wilfred H. Osgood.

In this paper of 86 pages, including index, we are given a glimpse of the physical features of the region treated in two maps and eleven half-tones, and in the word pictures which occupy a prominent part of the introduction. Some 43 mammals are given as occurring in the region, and 137 birds are listed. In compiling the lists, previous work is drawn upon. It is of interest to note that the bird list contains no new species or sub species. One born to such work cannot avoid a feeling of slight envy of those who are fortunate enough to get out into such remote and interesting fields while he congratulates the author upon his good work.

L. J.

A Discussion of the Origin of Bird Migration. By P. A. Travençolo. From The Auk, Vol. XXI, No. 3, July, 1904, pp. 322-333.

The author discusses the whole question of migration, but strongly emphasizes one point in previous discussions which has remained obscure. It is that the necessity for the northward movement was at first brought about (and the same necessity continues to the present time) by the fact that during the winter the tropics contain all the bird life they can support without the enormous increased demand for food which would result from the appearance of nestfuls of young. The southward movement began because returning cold destroyed the food north. Of course the laws of adaptation and the survival of the fittest must be brought in to complete the argument. The paper is a valuable one in bringing into prominence a factor which must have exerted a determining influence at the beginnings of this vast movement.

L. J.



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