

The illustrations in this number of *The Canadian Field-Naturalist* appear through the assistance of Mr. Ira Cornwall and the Canadian National Parks Branch, to whom we express our thanks and appreciation.—EDITOR.

The list of our subscribers paid up to December 31, 1923, will appear in the issue of *The Canadian*

Field-Naturalist for May, 1924. If our subscribers will inform us as to the natural science or sciences in which they individually are particularly interested, this information will be published with their names. Widespread action on this suggestion will make the list much more valuable to all concerned.—EDITOR.

BOOK REVIEW

JACK MINER AND THE BIRDS *and Some Things I Know About Nature*. By Jack Miner, of Kingsville, Ontario, Canada. Toronto, The Ryerson Press, (Manly F. Miner, Kingsville, sole agent and distributor.) PP. 12 plus 178. 53 illustrations. Preface by J. Earle Jenner, M.D.

Jack Miner's book, long awaited, has now been issued; and it will be eagerly read wherever "Uncle Jack's" fame has spread and wherever intimate studies of nature are appreciated. Its title, *Jack Miner and the Birds*, is aptly chosen; for it indicates the twofold interest of the book, in which—as in his lectures—the author's unique and attractive personality illuminates the nature-lore that he unfolds. His humour, his love of nature, and his reverence for the directing Power that he finds in nature, all are here, in telling phrases such as we have heard him use so often.

The book is a record of the response "wild" birds will make to the advances of friendly man. The chief feature is, of course, the well-known story of winning the confidence of the Canada Goose. From the four years of waiting after the first live decoys were secured, through the first visit of a wild flock in the spring of 1908, to the present annual visit of thousands of birds, this tale is told in detail. Not only Geese, but also Ducks and insectivorous birds lose their fears, confident in the protection of Jack Miner's sanctuary. The whole book illustrates the author's admonition: "Remember that it is the human race that is wild, not the birds. Birds are wild because they have to be, and we are wild because we prefer to be. Any creature that is intelligent enough to fly or run from you for self-preservation, will come to you for food and protection from all other enemies." (P. 16.)

Besides many miscellaneous observations of the habits and life-histories of birds, this book records the results of Jack Miner's investigations into the migrations of Ducks and Geese by "tagging". Of 440 ducks "tagged", 154 returns have been reported from birds that have been shot, a ratio of 34.8%. The location of these returns is given on a map and in a list; but unfortunately no distinction is made between the different species of Ducks. Many returns have been obtained by

retrapping birds at the sanctuary which had been caught and marked in previous seasons; but, although the histories of certain individuals are given, there is not a complete account of returns from this source. Geese have proved more difficult to trap than Ducks, but many returns have been secured from them also. A map shows thirty-six returns from James Bay and the eastern side of Hudson's Bay; one from Hamilton Inlet, Labrador; one each from Quebec (near the Ontario line), Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, and New Jersey; two from Maryland, three from Virginia, and fourteen from North Carolina. With the larger and more successful traps which he has recently installed, Jack is confident of securing more data on the migration of this species in the near future.

Jack Miner has hunted with a gun for the market, for the pot, and for sport; and now hunts chiefly without a gun. Just as he was too true a sportsman to continue long as a market hunter, he is now too true a sportsman to advocate the prohibition of hunting and shooting; but, like all true sportsmen, he is an ardent conservationist. His whole book is an argument for the preservation of our wild life, and especially our game. The claims of selfish men to all the game they want is answered by the claims of non-shooters to a right to the pleasures of nature and by the claims of future generations of shooters to an unimpaired breeding stock of game. Explicit suggestions are made for reformed game laws and for reformed methods of enforcement; but the author adds, "Personally I have more confidence in a thimbleful of education than I have in a barrelful of bayonet-point compulsion", (p. 149) and his book is no mean contribution to education for game protection.

To find fault with Jack Miner or his book is rather like complaining about the sun because of the sun-spots; but one could wish for a little more tolerance for predatory birds and mammals. A great deal of evidence is here advanced as to the destructiveness of such birds as Crow, Grackle, the Shrikes, Owls, accipitrine Hawks, etc.; and detailed methods are given for killing them. Without questioning "Uncle Jack's" observations or the necessity for reducing the numbers of

predators where special work with game birds or insectivorous birds is to be attempted, one can doubt whether wholesale warfare against Hawks and Owls is necessary and one can wish that the author had given greater prominence to his modification (p. 24), "I would not like to see these cannibal birds become extinct". He seems to overlook the possibility that those who enjoy the plaintive mystery of a Screech Owl or the dashing boldness of a Sharp-shinned Hawk may use against the lovers of game birds the same arguments that these have used against the wanton destroyers of game.

The book is well bound and printed, and at every point it is illustrated with excellently reproduced photographs. Dr. Jenner has contributed an appreciative preface, making the personality of Jack Miner more real for the reader. As a personal record, for the information it contains, and as a plea for the protection of wild-life, this book is valuable and should be read by all who find joy in Nature.—R. O. M.

BIRD-LORE OF THE NORTHERN INDIANS. By Frank G. Speck, Assistant Professor of Anthropology; reprinted from Vol. VII, Public Lectures by University of Pennsylvania Faculty, 1919-20; Philadelphia, Pa.; published by the University, 1921.

In the publication mentioned, Dr. Speck has gathered a considerable quantity of highly interesting aboriginal bird-lore which he has arranged in a manner as acceptable to the general public as to specialists in ornithology and anthropology.

Penobscot Indian names and beliefs have been taken as a basis, but considerable Malecite, Micmac and Abenaki material has also been included. This suggests that "Northeastern Indians", or "Eastern Indians", might have given the title somewhat more accuracy.

Dr. Speck is an enthusiastic naturalist on the side, and, as an anthropologist, has personally visited the Penobscot and a number of other eastern tribes, so that he combines the requisite abilities to do justice to a subject of the sort.

Mention is made in the paper of the large body of ornithological folk-lore in general which is current among eastern Algonkians, as well as the almost innumerable references of the kind in native mythology.

An interpretative tendency among the eastern Algonkians is noted, this being an attitude more or less opposed to exact or scientific observation.

Quite a number of the names applied to birds are onomatopoeic. Others, again, are descriptive of some habit or humorous characteristic. A certain amount of reduplication is also observable,

as in "kwikwimessu", which reminds one of Iroquois bird names.

Not all the birds are noted in folk-lore, but the native names are of interest to compare with our own, or with those of neighboring aborigines.

Among the birds around which considerable folk-lore and mythology have gathered are: the Loon, Crow, Chickadee, Eagle, Owl, and some others in a lesser degree, birds which are noted in the same connection, not only among widely-separated Algonkians, but throughout the eastern woodlands in general.

Still another feature of interest to the ethnologist is the wide Algonkian distribution of several bird names, either in almost identical, or in very similar form.—F. W.

BEACH GRASS, by Charles Wendell Townsend. Boston. Marshall Jones Company. 1923. Pages XII plus 319, with many half-tone illustrations. Price, \$3.50.

This is a very attractive volume by an author who is well known as a gifted interpreter of the natural history of north-eastern North America. As in a previous volume, *Sand Dunes and Salt Marshes*, the area dealt with is the sandy sea-shore region in the vicinity of Ipswich, Massachusetts, the location of the author's country home. The plants, the mammals, the birds, the weather, the ice and snow, the sand itself, and some of the characteristic human residents receive in turn that careful and sympathetic treatment for which the author is justly celebrated and which makes the subject under consideration delightfully real to the reader. Such chapter titles as "Tracks in the Sand", "Ice and Snow in the Sand Dunes", "A Winter Crow Roost", "The Forest", "Hawking", and "Courtship in Birds" give only a slight inkling of the large amount of natural history detail which has here been gathered together. Clear and pleasing photographs abound throughout the volume.

The account of the planting, on upland near the marshes, of an artificial "forest" of native trees, and of its struggle upward until it became a true woodland bower, full of greenery and birds and flowers, is particularly interesting, and presents an example worthy of repeated imitation.

The reviewer cannot but regret the occasional solecism, such as "the lisping notes and distinctive calls, so familiar to the ornithologist, that comes showering down from the sky", and the occasional misspelling, such as the repeated use of "lea" for "lee", but in general the story flows smoothly and the style has the peculiar attractive quality familiar to Dr. Townsend's host of readers.

A very useful index completes the volume.—H. F. L.



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