

nature photograph collections. Other prizes were donated by Dr. Ami for the best archæological and palæontological collections, and by Dr. Malte for the best botany collections.

A Publication Fund was established, to which the Province of Quebec Society for the Protection of Birds contributed \$125.00. Many other important contributions have been received and acknowledged in the *Naturalist*.

A serious shock to Council was the announcement that the Ontario Government had cancelled the \$200.00 grant, which had been paid annually to the Club since 1898. The importance of the continuance of this grant was emphasized to the Premier of the Province, and it was urged that the grant be increased from \$200.00 to \$500.00.

The Canadian Field-Naturalist, the official publication of the club and its affiliated societies, has completed a successful year, and Volume 38 contains much important scientific information, together with many illustrations. A special number on the "Birds of Saskatchewan" was published last May in cooperation with the Government of Saskatchewan.

The Toronto Field-Naturalists' Club was added last March as a new and important affiliated Society. Negotiations are in progress and it is hoped in the near future to affiliate with several other Natural History Societies. We now have ten affiliated societies.

Many other items of business were transacted and the above are only a few of the items of general interest.—J. F. WRIGHT, *Secretary*.

ANNUAL MEETING OF OTTAWA FIELD-NATURALISTS' CLUB.—The forty-sixth Annual Meeting of the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club was held Tuesday evening, December 2nd, 1924, in the auditorium of the Victoria Memorial Museum. President Hoyes Lloyd, in opening the meeting, told of some of the ways in which the Club was attempting to spread interest in natural history throughout Canada, and emphasized the most recent method, namely, by radio. The Minutes of the previous Annual Meeting, the Report of the Secretary of Council and the Treasurer's Report

were then read and adopted. The election of officers followed. The slate presented by Council was elected and the officers and additional council members for 1924-25 are as follows: President, Mr. Hoyes Lloyd; first vice-president, Mr. G. A. Miller; second vice-president, Mr. Norman Criddle; treasurer, Mr. B. A. Fauvel; secretary, Dr. J. F. Wright; additional members of council, Miss M. E. Cowan, Miss Faith Fyles, and Messrs. W. T. Macoun, A. Halkett, C. E. Johnson, Frits Johansen, C. M. Sternberg, H. I. Smith, F. W. Waugh, P. A. Taverner, E. Sapir, E. M. Kindle, W. J. Wintemberg, R. E. DeLury, Arthur Gibson, M. O. Malte, R. M. Anderson, H. Groh, C. B. Hutchings, H. M. Ami, C. L. Patch, D. Jenness, and H. F. Lewis. The Auditors elected for 1924-25 are A. E. Bateman and C. W. Twinn.

Following the brief business session Mr. Harrison F. Lewis of the Canadian National Parks staff and Editor-in-Chief of *The Canadian Field-Naturalist* gave a highly educational lecture on "Sea Birds" and showed, for the first time in Canada, 6 reels of moving pictures of the sea birds of the north shore of the Gulf of St. Lawrence or the Canadian Labrador coast. These moving pictures were taken by the Department of Trade and Commerce under the direct supervision of Mr. Lewis and Mr. P. A. Taverner. Many excellent close-up and general scenes of these rare and interesting birds and bird colonies were shown. These moving pictures are interesting and at the same time are of highly educational value, and therefore, it is hoped that, in the near future, they will be shown in many of our Canadian cities.

In closing the meeting President Lloyd conveyed to Mr. Lewis the appreciation of the Club for his splendid address, and also thanked the National Parks Branch for the loan of the films, and the Victoria Museum for the use of their lecture hall. About 300 members and their friends were present.—J. F. WRIGHT, *Secretary*.

For the illustrations in this issue *The Canadian Field-Naturalist* is indebted to Dr. R. E. DeLury, Mr. J. H. Bradley, Jr., and the Topographical Survey of Canada.—EDITOR.

BOOK REVIEW

THE AUK, 1923

Articles pertaining directly to Canadian ornithology.

A BREEDING STATION OF THE HORNED LARK AND PIPIT ON THE GASPE PENINSULA.—By Charles W. Townsend, pp. 85-87.

This paper extends the breeding range of the Eastern Horned Lark and the Pipit south of the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

In the *General Notes* for January, pp. 135-137, Harrison F. Lewis reports a number of notes on, and additions to, the list of birds of the Labrador Peninsula.

Under *Recent Literature* we observe *Ecological Note on the Birds Observed at the Biological Station of the University of Manitoba*, by Wm. Rowan—*Ecology*, Vol. III, 1922, pp. 255-260. An ecological study of the locality at Shoal Lake, eastern Mani-

toba. A list of the birds of this station was published by the same author in *The Auk* in 1922.

A photograph of a young Whooping Crane, taken in Saskatchewan in the summer of 1913 and published in *Bird-Lore* for September-October, 1922, is noted.

Under *Correspondence*, P. A. Taverner presents a circular, *The Genus Debased*, protesting against the too fine splitting of genera. The stand is taken that the *genus* is a division of expediency rather than a hard and fast unit of fact and that excessive multiplication of genera complicates rather than simplifies classification. Any scientific refinement in relationship can be expressed as well in subgenera, which, not being used as terms in the names of the species, will render unnecessary many aggravating changes in nomenclature and make for a simpler nomenclatural system. This circular is signed by the majority of systematic ornithologists of the United States and Canada.

NOTES ON THE BIRDS OF PORCHER ISLAND, B.C.—

By Allan Brooks, pp. 217-224.

Porcher Island is on the British Columbia coast opposite the Queen Charlotte Islands. These notes consist of annotations on fifty species, based on a nine-day visit in September, 1920, and on specimens and reports made by C. de B. Green as a result of a two months' stay there in June and July, 1921. The most notable things in this list are the Steller's Jay, Song Sparrow, and Ptarmigan. The first-named proves to be *annectens*, the Black-headed Jay of the interior, without a tendency towards *carlottae*, as would be expected. Major Brooks regards *caurina* as the breeding form of the Song Sparrow and *rufina* as a migrant, though this is not finally demonstrated. Ptarmigan taken prove to be Alexander's Ptarmigan, the first of the subspecies recorded from Canada.

THE MOURNING DOVE (*Zenaidura macroura carolinensis*) AT PANORA, IOWA.—*By L. L. Snyder, of the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, pp. 240-244, with an excellent plate.*

A good account of occurrence and habits of a nesting pair in the locality named.

BLUE FEATHERS.—*By Wilder D. Bancroft, Emile M. Chamot, Ernest Merritt, and Clyde W. Mason, pp. 275-300.*

This is a report of an investigation of the source of color in blue feathers, conducted under a grant from the Hekscher Foundation for the Advancement of Research at Cornell University. It is an abstract of a fuller account published in the *Journal of Physical Chemistry*. The final conclusions are summed up as follows:

1. Non-metallic blues of feathers are due to the scattering of blue light by very fine pores in the walls of the outer layer of cells of the barbs of the

feather. This is the blue described by Tyndall, which is commonly observed in turbid media.

2. No blue pigments, and no other structural causes of blue color have been observed in non-metallic blue feathers.

3. Green feathers are essentially the same as blue feathers, except that the blue cells are overlaid by a transparent yellow layer.

NESTING OF THE EVENING GROSBEEK IN NORTHERN MICHIGAN.—*By J. Stokley Ligon, pp. 314-316.*

This paper describes nests discovered on Whitefish Point, Michigan, in July, 1922. Whitefish Point is within twenty miles of the Canadian shore. The paper is accompanied by two photographs, one of nesting habitat and one of nestling bird.

TURKEY VULTURES IN ALBERTA.—*By James E. Horning, pp. 324-325.*

A report of the occurrence of Turkey Vultures at Ministick Lake, Alberta, July 2, 1922.

THE MYNAH.—A STUDY IN ADAPTATION.—*By Dayton Stoner, pp. 328-330.*

This is a note that should make interesting reading for bird lovers in Vancouver and adjacent localities, where the closely related Japanese Starling has gained a footing. Mr. Stoner's report of the effect of this species in the Hawaiian Islands, New Zealand, and Fiji is not reassuring. It has not made good in the destruction of noxious insects, it is dirty and unsightly in nesting habits, and it is supplanting native species.

Under *Recent Literature* is a review, on pp. 346-348, of *A Natural History of the Ducks*, Volume I, by John C. Phillips, Houghton Mifflin Co. This is a monumental work, sumptuously produced, which, when completed, will include all the Ducks of the world. Colored plates from the brushes of the best bird artists are reproduced by the finest processes. Maps represent the distribution of each species and the highest type of printing and book-making art is presented. The only criticism that the present reviewer, who has personally examined the work, would make, is that it is too fine and expensive for such an important work. The substance of the letter press is thoroughly in keeping with the appearance and shows an astounding amount of personal experience and research. Probably more of value regarding the Ducks will be found within its covers than in any other dozen works previously published—yet, instead of being available to every one interested, it is issued in a form that makes it obtainable only by a few wealthy bibliophiles or by large institutions. Most of the species treated of in this volume are extralimital to Canada. Our fellow countryman, Major Allan Brooks, is repre-

sented in it by one colored plate from his brush. In succeeding volumes there will be many more examples of his beautiful work.

Under *Correspondence*, Robert Ridgway, on pp. 371-375, counters the protesting circular, *The Genus Debased*, presented by P. A. Taverner as above noted. He urges the necessity of splitting genera wherever a split seems taxonomically necessary, yet, according to the present reviewer, who is not, however, a disinterested party to the dispute, it does not seem that he has shown any good reason why the desired results cannot be obtained through use of the subgenus, without loss of scientific accuracy and with a great increase of convenience to the general worker.—P. A. T.

(Concluded in the February issue.)

PALAEONTOLOGY OF THE SILURIAN ROCKS OF ARISAIG, NOVA SCOTIA, by F. H. McLearn. *Geological Survey of Canada Memoir 137*, pp. 179, pls. 30, Ottawa, 1924.

This memoir is a valuable addition to Canadian Palaeontology. In a brief introduction the author states that the Arisaig section was chosen because of the good preservation of the Silurian faunas at Arisaig, on the northeast coast of Nova Scotia. The reader is especially invited to note that the correlations and "conclusions are based primarily on Brachiopoda and Pelecypoda, to some extent on Trilobita, and subordinately on Graptolitoidea and Gastropoda". The introduction is accompanied by a sketch map making clear the geographic position of the region and the geological relationship of the formations to be discussed.

There follows a resumé of previous work on these faunas and the development of opinion with regard to their correlation with the Devonian or Silurian rocks of New York, with the evidence given for the final decision of the early writers that they represent a Silurian sea—a decision based on the fossil content correlated in a general way both with New York and English fossils. The relationship is shown between the stratigraphical divisions of the early investigators and the more clearly defined and finely distinguished divisions of the more recent workers.

A short description is given of the location of the more detailed sections, and the limiting

boundaries of the Ordovician below and the Devonian above, followed by the five formations into which the Arisaig series is divided. The formations are subdivided into zones based upon lithological differences or upon the prevalence of certain designatory fossils, with the exception of the Beechhill, the lowest formation, which is considerably thinner than the others. The description of each formation and each zone is accompanied by a bulwark of fossils. Then follows a marshalled array of fossils, giving in comprehensive detail the range of the species in zones as well as formations, with the comparative rarity or frequency of their occurrence. A glance at the long list in this finely worked out table is enough to suggest the picture of the thickly populated, moving, not to say squirming, sea-bottom in Arisaig days. Of the 214 species given, there are 9 new mutations, 17 new varieties, and 79 new species—that is, 105 new fossils, almost fifty per cent.

The remainder of this portion of the text is devoted to the very important question of correlation of the fauna. The author shows a very slight basis of comparison existing between one of the Arisaig divisions and one of the Anticosti divisions, and a stronger resemblance to some of the fauna at Eastport, Maine, but a much more definite and more interesting correlation is made with the fauna of England, Scotland, and Wales. There is a less definite comparison with the Silurian of Norway. These correlations on the eastern and western borders of the Atlantic raise some interesting possibilities as to the migration and distribution of species, particularly as the lowest member, the Beechhill, seems to have more in common with the eastern side of the Atlantic than with the Silurian of the interior of North America. The same can be said, though in a less degree, of the other formations.

The second part of the Memoir is devoted to a detailed description of species very minutely worked out, followed by a complete bibliography. Special emphasis should be laid upon the character of the thirty plates illustrating the species. They are not only very clear and well defined, but the soft tone is exceedingly restful and pleasing to the eye.—A. E. W.





Taverner, P. A. 1925. "The Auk, 1923 [Review]." *The Canadian field-naturalist* 39(1), 26–28. <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.338473>.

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