

through the generosity and interest of Miss Annie Alexander.\*

The work upon which this publication is founded was performed from May 25 to September 26, 1921, in the neighborhood of Hazelton, British Columbia, by Mr. Swarth and Mr. Wm. D. Strong. Hazelton is roughly as the Crow flies about 130 miles northeast of Prince Rupert, on the National Transcontinental line, latitude about 55°15' North and, except in Alaska, the most northern railroad point on the continent, being about on a line with the mouth of James Bay.†

The scope and treatment of the work is indicated by the division headings. Introduction, consisting of personnel of party and acknowledgements; Itinerary and Description of Localities; Zonal and Faunal Position of the Skeena Valley; Check-List of the Birds; General Accounts of the Birds, an annotated list, giving critical accounts of relationships and occurrences; Check-List of the Mammals; General Accounts of the Mammals, similar to those of the birds; and Literature Cited.

No very revolutionary discoveries are made. On the whole, the author finds upper Skeena fauna and flora to be of the interior rather than of the coast type, though certain coastal species occur farther inland here than in the Stikine Valley, the locality most likely to be compared with it. It is slightly more humid, but in many respects similar to that valley.

Some interesting occurrences are noted and the ranges of several forms and species extended. Fleming's Grouse (*Dendragapus obscurus flemingi*) extends this far south. The Willow Ptarmigan is referred to *alexandrae* and a Rock Ptarmigan, the female with a tail white at the base like that of *Lagopus hyperboreus* of Spitzbergen, is described and figured but not named. An interesting point brought out is that within a small area within this locality are found six species of Grouse—Ruffed, Blue and Franklin's and three Ptarmigan, an association that has heretofore not been equalled in this country. Both Eastern and Western Goshawks were taken and Eastern and Black Pigeon Hawks, the latter marking a considerable northern extension of range. The Vaux's Swift is probably also a northern record. Two Eastern Kingbirds were taken. A Red-winged Blackbird is referred to *arctolegus*. Strangely enough, Brewer's Blackbird is absent and its place is taken by the Rusty, a species from the east. The most northern record of the Evening Grosbeak (*brooksi*) was also made.

\*Others in the series have dealt with the fauna of the Alaskan coast, Vancouver Island and the upper Stikine River. A review of the latter is to be found in these pages, Vol. XXXVII, 1923, pp. 32-4.

†A short list of the summer birds of this same region has previously been published by Taverner, *Condor*, XXI, 1919, pp. 80-86.

The Purple Finch is the eastern form. All three Longspurs were secured. For Smith's Longspur it is the second record for the province, for the Chestnut-collared it is the first. A White-throated Sparrow is a notable occurrence. Three forms of Junco were collected. Mr. Swarth refers the breeding bird to *shufeldti* and migrants to *hyemalis* and *connectens*; the latter as defined in his *Birds of the Stikine River*. The Eastern Fox Sparrow was taken for the second time in the province but *allivagans* is given as the breeding form. A Catbird and a Western House Wren form northern records for their respective species. The Brown-headed Nuthatches he refers to *columbianus*.

The typographical and general appearance of this report is up to the usual high standard of the series and denotes careful work on the part of author, printer and proof-reader. The stock and workmanship show no lowering of quality, even in these days of high printing costs.—P. A. T.

Field notes and critical notes on taxonomy are given for the 21 species of small mammals listed, based on 265 specimens collected. The expedition was hardly far enough afield to be in the big game country, and the larger fur-bearers are difficult to observe at the season when the field operations were carried on, consequently only a few of the larger mammals are casually mentioned in the introduction.—R. M. A.

#### THE AUK, April, 1924

NESTS AND NESTING HABITS OF THE AMERICAN EAGLE. By Francis H. Herrick, pp. 213-231, continued pp. 389-422 and 517-541.

This is a very complete and intimate study, well illustrated with photographs, of the nesting of a pair of Bald Eagles. A most important paper to any one who is studying this species.

NESTING RECORDS OF THE WANDERING TATTLER AND SURF-BIRD IN ALASKA. By Olaus J. Murie, 3 plates, pp. 231-237.

Gradually we are getting exact data on the nesting areas of these birds, which have so long eluded us. It has long been felt, through a process of elimination, that they must nest in the mountain interior of Alaska. Our suppositions are being verified. In the summer of 1923 nests and eggs of the Wandering Tattler were found on gravel bars along small tributaries of the Tenana River, near Fairbanks, directly north of Prince William Sound. The exact locality is difficult to place on the map unless one is very familiar with Alaska or has maps that are more detailed than those generally accessible and it would be very helpful if authors who refer to such out-of-the-way places would state their latitude and longitude.



The nest of the Surf-bird was not found but downy young were taken, July 21, 1921, on McKinley Creek, a tributary of the Middle Fork of Forty-mile River, a little south of where the Yukon River crosses the International Boundary, and July birds were seen in the same and other years at the head of the Savage River and between "upper Chena and Chatanika waters", near Fairbanks.

A VISIT TO TOM LINCOLN'S HOUSE WITH SOME AUDUBONIA. By Charles W. Townsend, pp. 237-242.

The principal Canadian interest in this paper, outside of its connection with Audubon, in whom all American ornithologists are interested, is in the fact that it was Tom Lincoln who first discovered Lincoln's Sparrow, near Natashquan, on the north shore of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, then officially as well as popularly known as "The Labrador", and after whom it was named. The paper contains some interesting side lights on the Labrador trip—amongst them an amusing quotation of Lincoln's describing the great Audubon as "... a nice man but Frenchy as thunder."

RECOGNIZING INDIVIDUAL BIRDS BY SONG. By Aretas A. Saunders, pp. 242-259.

An interesting study of individual variation in bird songs. There is given a method of graphically representing bird songs that appears to have prospects of usefulness even to those without musically trained ears.

A STUDY OF THE HOME LIFE OF THE NORTHERN PARULA AND OTHER WARBLERS AT HATLEY, STANSTEAD COUNTY, QUEBEC, 1921-1922. With two plates of nests. By Henry Mousley

A very interesting study of the nesting of a number of Warblers that goes to confirm our belief that we have here in Canada a high authority on Warbler nesting habits.

PECULIAR BEHAVIOR OF THE SPOTTED SANDPIPER (*Actitis macularia*). By L. L. Snyder, pp. 341-342.

Records of the species perching on so small a support as a telegraph wire and swimming to avoid danger.

On page 342, Arthur T. Wayne records Great Horned Owls killing Barn Owls. Apropos of this, one of the best methods of attracting Owls within gun range at night is to imitate the call of the next weaker species. It will sometimes work even when their own calls fail to lure. They come to it with a vigor that leaves little doubt as to their immediate intention. It is interesting to note that nearly every wooded coulee of any extent in the Canadian prairies contains at least a pair of Long-eared Owls—unless a Great Horned Owl there holds

forth, in which case there is little chance of finding any smaller Owl resident in the area.

Dr. John C. Phillips's *Natural History of the Ducks, Part II*, is reviewed on pp. 358-359 at considerable length and with nothing but well-merited praise. This volume contains many of our native species and pictures by our countryman, Major Allan Brooks, are well represented among the illustrations. Perhaps no work ever before contained as much accurate and detailed information on the Ducks of any limited locality as this does on those of the world. That the name for the Mallard is given in some forty-five different languages illustrates the amount of research that has been put into these pages. The only shadow over the picture is the price—fifty dollars a volume—which places the work beyond the means of many who could make good use of it. Much of this expense is inevitable in the thorough presentation of the subject but a large part is due to the sumptuousness that makes a beautiful book, satisfying to aesthetic appreciation, without adding to its working value.

Wetmore's *Food and Economic Relations of North American Grebes*, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Department Bulletin No. 1196, 1924, pp. 1-24, is briefly reviewed on pp. 369-370, as is Casey Wood's *Birds of Fiji*, Handbook of Fiji, 1924, on p. 371. In the latter paper it is noted that the introduced Myna, closely related to the Chinese Starling, lately established in British Columbia, is a serious enemy of the native birds.

On p. 372 is an appreciation of Dr. John D. Tothill's work on the relation of birds to the Fall Webworm, published in Bull. 3, n.s., Dominion Dept. of Agriculture, Ottawa, 1922, 107 pp. The Red-eyed Vireo is given an astonishingly high place among the factors controlling these pests, as it was found to destroy from 11.4 to 89.5 per cent of the broods. Dr. Tothill decided that birds are of greatest importance when the insects are scarce and of least value when they are most abundant.

A paper on heterochrosis in the Crimson-breasted Parrot, by Casey Wood, published in *The Emu*, is noted.

On p. 383 is a letter by Allan Brooks taking exception to a denial, made by Ludlow Griscom in a recent paper, that the sex plumages of the Black Swift are similar in the adult. Major Brooks states that in some fully adult specimens the sexes are exactly alike, both in the lack of white feather edges below and in the emargination of the tail. A letter to the same effect by H. S. Swarth follows that of Major Brooks. Both of these authorities have had very ample experience with the species and their word must be regarded as final.



An obituary of Napoleon Alexander Comeau, the naturalist of the North Shore, whose death was noted in these pages before, appears on pp. 387-388.—P. A. T.

HISTORIES OF NEW FOOD-FISHES, *Bulletins of the Biological Board of Canada*, Nos. I-IV, 1918-20; 80 pp., Illustrated.

This series comprises short popular monographs on Canadian fishes of economic value, but hitherto little considered by the fisherman or consumer, owing to the abundance of more marketable species along our Atlantic Coast. As these latter, however, owing to intensive fishing, decrease in numbers and size, or, owing to their migratory habits, occasionally fail to appear at the different localities, it is important to utilize other species, which are really obtainable in large quantities, but which at present are taken only as by-products, during the fishing for Cod, Herring, Mackerel, etc., along our coasts, and are generally discarded; or for which no fishery at all has been made up to the present time, though in European waters their value is fully appreciated, both by the fisherman and by the ordinary consumer. There they find a ready market, chiefly in a salted or smoked state, owing to their generally fairly large size. Though Canadian and Alaskan waters are undoubtedly some of the most important fishing-grounds in the world, and rich in variety, the number of fish species considered of commercial importance here is surprisingly small, and the fishery is limited to them. The Indians along the American Pacific, the Eskimos and other Arctic tribes, and the coastal fisherman of northern and western Europe have long shown the way to utilize the many edible and nourishing products of the sea, besides the few species bringing the highest prices sought for by white fishermen in America. A number of the fishes of economic value occur on both sides of the Atlantic and the Pacific, particularly towards the north, both the ones of prime commercial importance at present, and a host of others so far little considered in America.

It is for the purpose of calling attention to these latter ones, some of which may one day become as important to our fishermen as are now the Halibut,

the Lobster, or the Oyster, that these *Histories of New Food-Fishes* are published.

The first Bulletin in the series deals with the Canadian Plaice (*Drepanopsetta platessoides*), or Long Rough Dab, and is by the Director of the Atlantic Biological Station at St. Andrews, N.B., Dr. A. G. Huntsman. The second is written by Prof. P. Cox, of the University of New Brunswick, and treats of the Lumpsucker (*Cyclopterus lumpus*). The third is by Prof. W. A. Clemens, now Director of the Pacific Biological Station at Nanaimo, B.C., and deals with the Rock-eel or Mutton fish (*Zoarces anguillaris*); while the fourth bulletin, by Prof. C. J. Conolly, of Antigonish, N.S., describes the Angler or Frog-fish (*Lophius piscatorius*). The more detailed, scientific accounts of the fish-species treated in these *Histories of New Food-Fishes*, will be found in *Contributions to Canadian Biology*, already reviewed in *The Canadian Field-Naturalist*.

Each one of these four Bulletins is well supplied with illustrations, as plates or in the text, showing the distribution, growth, and appearance of the particular species, from the egg and the larva up to the adults. The text is subdivided into suitable short chapters on the different subjects discussed in connection with each fish: as their popular names in Europe and America; the systematic characters; occurrence along the different coasts; capture and economic value; spawning and development; habits, food, parasites, etc., according to our present knowledge. As the four species represent both deep water and coastal forms; both viviparous and egg-laying species; species depositing their eggs among rocks and sea-weed along the shore, and species having floating (pelagic) eggs, these accounts of merely four fishes show the great variety in their natural history, and the importance of a proper understanding of the natural history of each species in its economic utilization. Furthermore, each bulletin is written in a style both plain and interesting; contains original data secured in Canada, and deals mainly with the life-history along our own coasts. These *Histories of New Food-Fishes* may be had for 10 or 15 cents apiece, on application to the Biological Board of Canada.—F. J.

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