

REVIEWS

***Peromyscus maniculatus macrorhinus* and the problem of insularity.** By T. T. McCabe and Ian McTaggart Cowan. *Trans. Royal Can. Inst.* 25: 117-215. 1945.

This deals with an extremely interesting problem, the formation of races on islands off the British Columbia coast. The background is elaborately laid; the glacial history discussed, with a useful bibliography of the subject; the topography, climate, and flora are outlined; the other mammals considered; and then the deer mice are discussed.

On a series of islands or island groups off the British Columbia coast, some of them small, and some of them narrowly separated from their neighbors, are a series of endemic races of *Peromyscus maniculatus*.

Their present range has been habitable only a few thousand years, since the retreat of the ice. That the colonization was by "slide" rafts and perhaps by human aid is probable. Though a number of recognizable races have evolved which are probably polyphyletic, there has been a tendency for them to show resemblances among themselves which suggest to the authors that some cosmic force is at work on that coast which they phrase as, "certain deep-seated energies, somehow connected with the peculiar environment, acting slowly on the great populations of the region as a whole, but here breaking forth, under peculiarly favorable conditions, in a volcanic manner", and they seem to doubt that these geographical variants are providing material from which species evolve. Seven new forms are described. Statistical treatment is used where possible and variations are presented in tables.

The paper is stimulating but one wishes it were not written in a style that makes it difficult to understand. The authors' aspersions on conventional methods make their own shortcomings more prominent and it might be wished that more conventional methods had been employed, at least for the new descriptions; that "new subspecies" was added after the new names when they first appear; that measurements (rather than actual plotted lengths) were given; and that such general statements as "*Microtus* and

Clethrionomys — genera which never enter houses or cabins" had been corrected. — A. L. RAND.

Fruit Key to Northeastern Trees. By William M. Harlow. Published by the author, 234 Kensington Pl., Syracuse, N.Y., 1946; pp. 50 with 129 illustrations; frontispiece. Price 50c.

This small volume presents a dichotomous key to the fruits of the common trees of northeastern United States and adjacent Canada. The fruit of each of the species in the key is illustrated. There is an introduction discussing coniferous and angiospermous fruits as well as descriptions, illustrations and a summary of the various types of fruits. In most instances the illustrations are satisfactory although in some cases the method of reproduction has not permitted sufficient contrast to make the distinctive characters of the fruit sufficiently clear. The low cost and the simple construction of the key recommend this work to amateurs interested in studying the fruits of our native trees. — HAROLD A. SENN.

The vegetation of the Annapolis Valley. By Albert E. Roland, *Acadian Naturalist*. 2(7):1-20. 7pl. 1946.

This account of the vegetation of the Annapolis Valley of Nova Scotia by the Provincial Botanist is based on field work carried out in 1942 by him, W. G. Dore and R. M. Lewis. A description of the present vegetation on the sandy soils of the Valley is presented together with a detailed account of the plant succession. The effects of cultivation, cutting and fire are discussed and valuable recommendations made for replanting and forest management.

The author concludes with the statement: "Very little forest management is carried out at the present time in these sand areas. The reason seems to be lack of appreciation of the value of continuous production, and carelessness in cutting. The area, with its varied stands, its accessibility, and its present low value offers one of the best opportunities for a community or county forest in Eastern Canada." — HAROLD A. SENN.



Senn, Harold A. 1947. "Fruit key to northeastern trees, by William M. Harlow [Review]." *The Canadian field-naturalist* 61(3), 118–118.

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