

that he rejects *Chlidonias* because published in a newspaper, but at the same time names are accepted from foreign journals which differ little if at all in character from that in which Rafinesque published his genus.

Among forms rejected by Mr. Ridgway we notice *Squatarola squatarola cynosura* Thayer and Bangs, while our two species of Yellowlegs which Dr. Oberholser, following Mathews, regards as belonging to two different genera Mr. Ridgway finds to be strictly congeneric. It is very gratifying to have his fair and unbiased opinion on this and a number of other recently proposed changes which will have to be decided some day by the A. O. U. Committee.

We are pleased to learn from the preface that work is already in progress on Part IX, which will include the Cranes, Gallinaceous Birds, and Birds of Prey, leaving the remaining families for Part X. We sincerely hope that Mr. Ridgway will be able to complete these two volumes in the near future and round out what will for a long time rank as the most important systematic work on American birds.— W. S.

Witherby's 'A Practical Handbook of British Birds.' — Two more parts of this excellent work¹ have appeared since our previous notice (Auk, 1919, p. 432), covering the remainder of the Fringillidæ, the Alaudidæ, and most of the Motacillidæ. The standard set in the first part is admirably maintained and a vast amount of accurate information is presented in a concise form. The colored plates, which are most attractively printed, represent the heads of Buntings and Wagtails and a group of Crossbills with nest and young, while the uncolored halftone plates of Redpolls and of young Larks and Pipits are exceedingly well drawn, to show the differences in plumage, while the printing gives a remarkably soft effect. The Redpoll plate may be consulted with profit by American bird students who desire to become better acquainted with the appearance of the several boreal forms which occasionally visit our northern States in winter.

We note that Mr. Witherby rejects Kleinschmidt's name *hostilis* for the British House Sparrow, which is the same race as that which we have in America. The only way in which it was claimed that it differed from the continental race was in its smaller size, but Mr. Witherby finds that the average difference in length of wing is less than 3 mm. and that of 90 individuals only 17 could be certainly distinguished by their size. Dr. Oberholser (Auk, 1917, p. 329) accepted Kleinschmidt's name without presenting any corroborative evidence, but in view of Mr. Witherby's investigations we may safely retain *domesticus* as the name of our "English Sparrow." — W. S.

¹ A Practical Handbook of British Birds, Edited by H. F. Witherby. Part 2 (pp. 68–128), April 30, and Part 3 (pp. 129–208), June 18, 1919. Price 4s. net per part. In 18 parts. Witherby & Co., 326 High Holborn, W. C. I., London.



Witherby, H. F. 1919. "Witherby's 'A Practical Handbook of British Birds'" *The Auk* 36, 597–597. <https://doi.org/10.2307/4073397>.

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