

new, being even considerably modified from that proposed by the same writer in 1870.

The Indian Region is divided into five subregions, and the Australian into seven; but they are given simply in a tabular enumeration without attempt at definition beyond that implied in the names given them. The accompanying maps, however, serve to define them, and also all of the other zoögeographical areas mentioned in the accompanying text.

The paper as a whole gives evidence of hasty preparation, and is quite too brief for a satisfactory presentation of the subject, the treatment being merely in outline. We trust that Dr. Sharpe will soon find time to return to this interesting subject, to which he has evidently given so much attention, and present his views in greater detail, backed by fuller statistical information as to the distinctive elements of the several areas here outlined. For the most part his scheme seems reasonable, the chief blemish being in his treatment of the Arctic and Cold Temperate portions of the northern hemisphere, which is much less satisfactory than Prof. Newton's allocation of this whole area as a single 'Holarctic Region' (*cf. antea*, p. 59). —J. A. A.

Apgar's Pocket Key of Birds.¹—A manual of North American birds compact enough and cheap enough to accommodate itself to every one's pocket, one by which even the most inexperienced can identify a bird in the hand, will be widely welcomed. Indeed it is hard to conceive of a more useful book—or one more difficult to prepare. It is not so very hard, with unlimited space and a free use of technical terms, to write descriptions by which an ornithologist of some experience can identify birds he already more than half knows; but diagnoses that shall be concise and sufficient, untechnical and clear, that shall make obscure plumages easy for the tyro to recognize, are by no means a simple matter. Yet this is exactly what is needed.

The present volume begins with a 'Key to the Families,' and then each family, from the Thrushes to the Grebes, is treated in turn. First comes a key to its genera (and sometimes to convenient subdivisions of the larger genera), then under each a statement of characters by which the species it contains may be distinguished. These specific diagnoses are very brief, averaging only eight or ten words apiece. For many species, those whose characters are well marked and constant, this is enough. In more difficult cases it would not be surprising if the student were to agree with the author, that "after the supposed name is determined, it would be well to read a full description in such works as those of Dr. Jordan, Dr. Coues, or Mr. Ridgway, to verify the determination." When a writer takes such a modest view of the purposes of his book, it is hard to

¹ Pocket Key | of the | Birds | of the | Northern United States, | east of the Rocky Mountains. | — | By | Austin C. Apgar, | Author of "Trees of the Northern United States," "Mollusks of the | Atlantic Coast," &c. | — | Trenton, N. J. | The John L. Murphy Pub. Co., Printers. | 1893. 16, 2 pp. 63[= 61].

censure him for lightening his task, as he has done, by ignoring subspecies,¹ and often, too, by giving descriptions only sufficient to identify the adult males. Here, alas, he has but followed in the footsteps of leading ornithologists, and he can hardly be blamed for taking them as models rather than as warnings.—C. F. B.

Allen's Notice of some Venezuelan Birds, collected by Mrs. H. H. Smith.²—Although based on a small collection of about 60 specimens, this paper shows what may yet be done in comparatively well worked areas of South America, three of the forty-eight species being new to science, two others present differences which will probably be found constant when additional specimens are examined, while the identification of two others is merely provisional.

The new forms described are *Ramphocælus atrosericeus capitalis*, *Lophotriccus subcristatus*, and *Picumnus obsoletus*—all from El Pilar, "a little way in the interior" of the country.

A species which, if correctly identified, has its known range much extended is *Hapalocercus fulviceps* (Scl.), previously recorded only from western Ecuador and Peru.

We regret to see, in the spelling of the generic name *Ramphocælus* (instead of *Ramphocelus*), on p. 51, a disregard—doubtless accidental—of one of the rules of nomenclature of the American Ornithologists' Union (Canon XL).—R. R.

Allen's List of Birds collected in Northeastern Sonora and Northwestern Chihuahua.³—This is a list of 162 species, based on a collection of about one thousand specimens, made chiefly by Mr. Frank Robinette, of Washington, D. C. Although the localities represented are 150 miles or more from the southern boundary of Arizona, all but ten of the 162 species have been taken within our limits. These peculiarly Mexican forms are the following: "*Callipepla elegans*" (= *C. e. bensoni* Ridgw.⁴), *Rhynchopsitta pachyrhyncha*, *Euptilotis neoxenus*, *Campephilus imperialis*, "*Myiarchus inquietus* Salv. and Godm.,"⁵ *Aimophila superciliosa*,

¹This is doubly unfortunate, for it results in the introduction of misleading names,—for instance, *Turdus aonalaschkæ*, *Ammodramus sandwichensis*, and *Empidonax pusillus* for the Hermit Thrush, Savanna Sparrow, and Traill's Flycatcher.

²Notice of some Venezuelan Birds, collected by Mrs. H. H. Smith. By J. A. Allen. Bull. Am. Mus. Nat. Hist., Vol. IV, No. 1, Article V, April 6, 1892, pp. 51-56.

³List of Mammals and Birds collected in Northeastern Sonora and Northwestern Chihuahua, Mexico, on the Lumholtz Archæological Expedition, 1890-92. By J. A. Allen. Bull. Am. Mus. Nat. Hist., Vol. V, Art. 3, March 16, 1893, pp. 27-42.

⁴Forest and Stream, XXVIII, No. 6, 1887, p. 106; Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., X, July 2, 1887, 148-150.

⁵Identification open to question.



Apgar, A. C. 1894. "Apgar's Pocket Key of Birds." *The Auk* 11, 65–66.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/4067633>.

View This Item Online: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/55089>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2307/4067633>

Permalink: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/88558>

Holding Institution

Smithsonian Libraries and Archives

Sponsored by

Smithsonian

Copyright & Reuse

Copyright Status: Public domain. The BHL considers that this work is no longer under copyright protection.

This document was created from content at the **Biodiversity Heritage Library**, the world's largest open access digital library for biodiversity literature and archives. Visit BHL at <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org>.