

are satisfactory. While in a few instances there is some approach to accuracy, and, as a rule, the coloring is an aid to identification, there are many figures in which the coloring is so misleading as to defy an expert to guess what the figures were intended to represent. This is the more to be regretted since the plan of the book is such that the plates are designed to constitute the 'key.' As said, the figures are grouped on the plates according to size, and hence without regard to natural arrangement, while in the text the species are arranged in systematic order, from the Bob-white to the Bluebird, and numbered consecutively. As the same numbers are used on the plates, where their arrangement is heterogeneous, it is an oversight on the part of the author not to cite the plates in the text, and thus save his reader the trouble of hunting through the plates for the desired figure.

Mr. Knobel divides his birds on the basis of size into the following four categories: 1, 'Birds the size of a Crow or larger'; 2, 'Birds the size of a Robin or Jay, etc.'; 3, 'Birds about the size of a House Sparrow'; 4, 'Birds smaller than a House Sparrow'; the third group being further divided into: 'a, bright colored; b, without speckles; c, brown with speckles.' We must thus look on plate V for No. 144 and on plate IX for 145, with no clue in the text to guide us in our search for the figures of our two species of Nuthatch.

The text consists of a short general description of each bird, followed by a varying amount, from two or three lines to half a page, of biographical information, all printed in uniform type, and as a continuous paragraph, with nothing to distinguish typographically the descriptive from the biographical matter.

The plan of the book is good, but the cheapness of its execution will go far to defeat its excellent purpose. If more care and expense had been devoted to the color printing, and a little more taste had been displayed in the production of the text, the book would doubtless have fully accomplished the author's purpose, and have proved a pleasing as well as useful contribution to the list of popular bird books. — J. A. A.

Mrs. Miller's 'The First Book of Birds.'—In the present work¹ we have a book prepared expressly for children by an author especially well-fitted for the task. "This book," says the author, "is intended to interest young people in the ways and habits of birds, and to stimulate them to further study. It has grown out of my experience in talking to schools. From the youngest kindergarten scholar to boys and girls of sixteen and eighteen, I have never failed to find young people intensely

¹ The First Book | of Birds | By Olive Thorne Miller | with eight colored and twelve | plain plates and twenty | figures in the | text | [Monogram] Boston and New York | Houghton, Mifflin and Company | The Riverside Press, Cambridge | 1899—Square 12mo, pp. x + 150, pll. 20 (eight colored), and 20 text figures. \$1.00.

interested so long as I would tell them about how birds live.... It has, therefore, seemed to me that what is needed at first is not the science of ornithology, — however diluted, — but some account of the life and habits, to arouse sympathy and interest in the living bird, neither as a target nor as a producer of eggs, but as a fellow-creature whose acquaintance it would be pleasant to make."

The book, it is needless to say, is couched in terms easily understood, and written in an attractive and sympathetic vein. It consists of thirty short chapters, grouped under the following four major headings — 'The Nestling'; 'The Bird grown up'; 'How he is made'; 'His Relations with us.' Under the first is treated not only the nest and the young bird, but its various changes of plumage, and how it learns to take care of itself, while under the third are given some elementary lessons on the structure of birds, etc. The twelve halftone and eight colored plates are very creditable reproductions of photographs of mounted birds and must add much to the interest and attractiveness of the book. Our only criticism is that they are copied from rather badly stuffed specimens with cheap artificial accessories, the excellence of the reproduction thus only heightening the defects of the tell-tale taxidermy. They hence lack artistic effect, which fact, perhaps, does not seriously detract from their utility as illustrations. — J. A. A.

Stone on Birds from Bogota.¹ — The small collection of birds forming the basis of this paper was made by the late Dr. J. W. Detwiler, in the vicinity of Bogota, in 1888-89. It contained 76 species, and as the exact localities of the specimens are indicated, it is of some importance in throwing light upon the distribution of the species. One, *Speotyto cunicularia tolimæ*, is described as new. Incidentally the South American forms of *Speotyto* and *Troglodytes* are reviewed, Mr. Stone recognizing five of the former and ten of the latter, of which eight belong to the *Troglodytes musculus* group. Mr. Stone has also described a new Cuckoo,² from the island of St. Andrews, West Indies, as *Coccyzus abotti*, nearly allied to *C. minor*, of which species it is apparently an insular form. — J. A. A.

Chapman on New Birds from Venezuela.³ — A small collection of birds received recently at the American Museum of Natural History

¹ On a Collection of Birds from the Vicinity of Bogota, with a Review of the South American species of *Speotyto* and *Troglodytes*. By Witmer Stone. Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Philadelphia, 1899, pp. 302-313.

² A New Species of *Coccyzus* from St. Andrews. By Witmer Stone. *Ibid.*, p. 301.

³ Descriptions of Five Apparently New Birds from Venezuela. By Frank M. Chapman. Bull. Am. Mus. Nat. Hist., Vol. XII, 1899, pp. 153-156. August 5, 1899.



Miller, Harriet Mann. 1899. "Mrs. Miller's 'The First Book of Birds'" *The Auk* 16, 368–369. <https://doi.org/10.2307/4069383>.

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