

records only. The Museum collection, unrepresentative until 1935, was enhanced by 26 individuals of 4 species, washed ashore near Adelaide in 1935. Notes, with measurements of specimens examined, etc., on each species. Three plates, map and text figure. Part 6 contains many interesting short articles.

The Ibis, Vol. vi, No. 2. Contains "The Finches of the Galapagos in relation to Darwin's Conception of Species," by Percy R. Lowe; "A Nominal List of the Birds of Celebes," by Dr. Erwin Stresemann. Short notes include "On *Tribonyx ventralis*," "Glossy Ibis in New Zealand" (3rd record), "Dove-like Petrels of the genus *Pterodroma*."

Reviews

["The Birds of the South Orkney Islands." By R. A. B. Ardley, R.N.R. *Discovery Reports*, vol. xii, pp. 349-376, 3 plates. Cambridge University Press, 1936.]

Lieutenant Ardley's account of the birds of the South Orkney Islands is the third report on field observations of Antarctic and Sub-antarctic birds to be issued by the Discovery Committee, having been preceded by *Birds of South Georgia*, by L. Harrison Matthews, 1929, and "The Sub-antarctic Forms of the Great Skua," by J. E. Hamilton, 1934. The present report deals with all the birds that visit the South Orkney Islands for breeding purposes or which occur as occasional stragglers.

The avifauna of this group of islands was studied by the members of the Scottish National Antarctic Expedition and described by W. Eagle Clarke in *The Ibis* for January, 1906, but Lieutenant Ardley has had the advantage of visiting many of the islands not visited by the *Scotia*, and his account is in that respect more comprehensive. It is greatly to the credit of this author that in a period of only twenty-eight days he made so complete a study of the birds, in addition to carrying out his routine duties during the survey of the entire group in which the ship's company of the R.R.S. *Discovery II* was engaged in January, 1933.

There is much valuable data in the estimation of the population of the various breeding species, and a clear summary of the differences in breeding dates and in habits that distinguish some of the otherwise closely related Penguins and Petrels. Colours of soft parts in life and nestling plumages are carefully described. In the case of *Daption capense* the account is, in the reviewer's opinion, the best that has been published on the nesting of the species. The nests and young of *Priocella antarctica* (Stephens) are described for the first time. The author has also followed several recent writers in this field by discussing the plumage phases of *Macronectes giganteus* which

range from dark brown to pure white. He concurs in the opinion that the percentage of white birds seen increases with degrees of south latitude. With almost all writers on this subject he remarks on the predominance of dark brown birds in lower latitudes without referring to the important fact that uniform dark brown is the plumage of immature birds, which alone, almost without exception, range to the northward of breeding places in the summer. As far as available records show the darkest *breeding* birds are the birds which Ardley calls "dark intermediates" and which Bennett (*Ibis*, 1926) calls "grey-necks." A discussion of colour phases as distinct from age phases should probably begin with them, ignoring the uniform brown of the immature birds.

The report is an important contribution to the ornithology of a region that is now receiving much attention, Dr. R. C. Murphy's great work on the oceanic birds of South America having just appeared, the reports of Sir Douglas Mawson's expeditions being in the press, and the British Graham Land Expedition being still in the field.—R.A.F.

[*The Birds of Nippon*. By Prince Taka-Tsukasa, Vol. i, part 5, pp. 239-290 + lxi-lxxvi. H. F. & G. Witherby, London, Yokendo and Tokyo.]

The author completes in this part the bibliography started in Part 4. This gives a complete list of all works referred to in *The Birds of Nippon*, together with "Indispensable reference books for the study of Japanese ornithology of the present time."

There are five forms dealt with: *Tetrastes bonasia vicinitas*, *T. b. coreensis*, *Falcipennis falcipennis*, *Tetrao parvirostris*, *Lyrurus tetrix ussuriensis*. Of these, the author, on fairly conclusive evidence, would relegate *T. b. coreensis*, together with *T. b. amurensis* and presumably *T. b. kolymensis* to the synonymy of *T. b. vicinitas* Riley. There has been a considerable amount of divergent opinion on the matter for many years, the difficulty being increased by the dimorphism of *Tetrastes*, the two forms of which are stated by the inhabitants of Hokkaido to inhabit the evergreen and deciduous woods respectively. The author, with Lönnberg and others, is inclined to support the opinion that the Japanese and Siberian birds are identical with the typical Scandinavian form.

The author maintains the high standard of the notes on nomenclature, description, food, nidification, etc., commented on in the reviews of earlier parts. The fact that 290 pages of this work have accounted for only 22 species and subspecies indicates that the total production will be of considerable magnitude and probably involve many more years in compiling.—R.S.M.

[*How to Know British Birds*. By Norman H. Joy. 136 pp., 40 plates. London, H. F. & G. Witherby, Ltd. Price, 5/-.]

The jacket describes the above as a bird identification book on a new principle, and indeed there is much of novelty in the system of stressing peculiar shape or noticeable action or other prominent feature. These distinguishing marks are printed in italics. Care has been taken in choosing just the characteristic points that are so helpful to the observer, and, to the novice, invaluable. Once having seized on these specific characters the other description can be fitted in later. The principle has been persisted in with regard also to the illustrations, of which there are nearly 300. Thus, the most usual pose is depicted—the field sketches are the author's own—so that, apart from colour and markings, the observer gets to know the general appearance of the bird in flight, at rest, or else the position in which it is most usually encountered. The colour appears a trifle bright in one or two cases.

A chapter on songs and notes and a general index dealing with such varied items as "Cliffs" (indicating the likely dwellers there) and "Mobbed by Passerines" (Cuckoos, Owls, Hawks) are also aimed at assisting aspiring bird students to know their birds. This Bird-lovers' Manual should be of great use as a field pocket-book.—C.E.B.

Correspondence

R.A.O.U. CHECKLIST

To the Editor

Sir—This year the second edition of the *Checklist* celebrates its tenth birthday and, as much work in Australian ornithology has been covered in the past decade, is it not time that active measures are taken to make many necessary amendments to the List? At the Congress held at Hobart in 1932 the Editor mooted the matter and a resolution was passed to re-form the Checklist Committee. At the Council meeting held at Melbourne on February 14, 1933, the Editor, in furtherance of his previous action, moved, and it was resolved that, without limiting its scope, the Committee should consider: (a) Extension and definition of distribution; (b) status of "new" Australian birds; (c) reclassification of groups; (d) acceptance in whole or in part of *Systema Avium Australasianarum*; (e) revision of scientific and trivial nomenclature; (f) general matters incidental to the foregoing; and that State Secretaries be asked to arrange appointment of one member from their State, if desired, but on account of the limited number of the Committee they should be advised not to exercise the appoint-