

of that whistler), *Nycticorax caledonicus hilli* Mathews, 1912 (the north-western form of the Night-Heron), and *Neopoëphila personata hilli* Mathews, 1923 (apparently a recognizable subspecies of the Masked Finch from Borrooloola).

His contributions to *The Emu* are as follows: Vol. 6, pp. 176-179, 'Birds of the Ararat District, Part 1'; vol. 7, pp. 18-23, 'Birds of the Ararat District, Part 2'; vol. 8, pp. 22-23, 'Birds of Inverloch (Vic.)'; vol. 10, pp. 258-290, 'Field Notes on the Birds of Kimberley, North-west Australia'; vol. 12, pp. 238-262, 'Ornithological Notes, Barclay Expedition'; vol. 13, pp. 195-196, 'Charcoal in Finches' Nests'.—A.R.M.

Reviews

Lorenz on Behaviour of Ducks.—*Avicultural Magazine*, Sep.-Oct. 1951 (vol. 57, pt. 5) to May-June 1953 (vol. 59, pt. 3) published an English translation of Dr. Konrad Lorenz's 'Vergleichende Bewegungsstudien an Anatinen', *Journal für Ornithologie*, 1941. The translation, entitled 'Comparative Studies of the Behaviour of Anatinae', is by Dr. C. H. D. Clarke (Division of Fish and Wildlife, Ontario, Canada). It was made available to *Avicultural Magazine* through the initiation of Mr. F. H. Kortright (author of *The Ducks, Geese and Swans of North America*). The translation as printed is illustrated with the numerous blocks used in the original printing, and made available by Professor Dr. Erwin Stresemann, editor of the *Journal für Ornithologie*. In view of his work on the subject since 1941, Dr. Lorenz made alterations and additions to the translation. After publication in parts the complete translation was reprinted and issued as a booklet, now being noted (88 pages, 5/- stg., The Avicultural Society, 61 Chase Road, Oakwood, London).

This note does not attempt to review Lorenz's paper, of which another ethologist of senior status, Dr. N. Tinbergen, stated in *The Ibis* (April 1946, vol. 88, p. 261)—"Together with Heinroth's work on the Anatidae this work will stand as a classic. In an introduction the historic origin of the various signal movements is considered and the importance of their study for both ethological and taxonomic-evolutionary problems is discussed. At the end, the numerous details of the admirable descriptive part are put together into a tentative systematic arrangement. . . . The excellent drawings, based on cinematographic pictures, deserve special mention." Although Lorenz retains certain families and genera either reduced or not retained by Delacour and Mayr in their later review of the Anatidae, those authors reported ('Supplementary Notes on the Family Anatidae', *The Wilson Bulletin*, June 1946, vol. 58, no. 2, p. 109) that Lorenz's ". . . conclusions on the interrelation of the Anatini are in nearly complete agreement with our conclusions. We hope that it will soon be possible to make this work available to American readers in an English translation, not only for the importance of his conclusions, but also as a model of modern ethological technique."

All except two of the seventeen species and one hybrid dealt with in Clarke's translation are of the dabbling 'tip-up' ducks; the other two are 'perching' ducks. The only Australian species included in detailed comment is the Chestnut-breasted Teal, *castanea*, which, with the Grey Teal, *gibberifrons*, shows in several respects, Lorenz states, a significant connection with the Mallard types, and "between themselves these two species [of teal] are just as closely related as the Mallard species with a showy breeding plumage are to those without one."

The translation provides to English-speaking ornithologists not only elucidation of behaviour patterns of ducks, but also descriptive illustration and terminology which will probably become standard for reporting of the involved physical display actions of Anatinæ species. Australia has sixteen such species (by the Delacour and Mayr sub-family status of Anatinæ).—J.J.

Birds of Japan.—'Birds of Japan, Their Status and Distribution,' *Bull. Mus. Compar. Zool.* (Harvard), 1953, vol. 109, no. 4, pp. 280-637, by Dr. Oliver L. Austin, Jr., formerly head of the Wildlife Branch, Natural Resources Section, S.C.A.P., in post-war Japan, with the collaboration of Nagahisa Kuroda (son of Nagamichi Kuroda) provides for present and future ornithologists an indispensable reference on Japanese birds.

The sub-title accurately describes the nature of the textual content, which is supplemented in many instances by detailed information on ecology and nesting, migration data, conservation and management, and hunting methods. For the taxonomist there are ample discussions on the subspecific status of many Japanese forms of Palaearctic species.

The 'tailpiece' of this exhaustive paper comprises an annotated list of Japanese-language fauna periodicals, a selected bibliography, a useful map, and an excellent index.

Reprinted in book form, and with the addition of plates illustrating the 415 forms treated, this publication would provide a very good handbook on Japanese birds.—W.B.H.

Cape York Birds.—In *Mem. Qld. Mus.*, 1953, vol. 13, pt. 1, pp. 1-39 ('Birds from Cape York Peninsula, Queensland') George Mack has reported on a collection made by Queensland Museum preparator, D. P. Vernon, in eastern Cape York—between Portland Road and Cooktown—May 29 to September 27, 1948. Though the area covered was relatively small, 140 species were collected, of which 134 are recorded.

The nomenclature used shows some rather startling departures from the R.A.O.U. *Checklist*. The majority of species changes are clear enough in the light of recent taxonomic work, particularly on New Guinea birds, but it would be interesting to know why the author uses *Ieracidea* (for *Falco berigora*), *Carphibis* (for *Threskiornis spinicollis*), and *Myiolestes* (for *Colluricincla megarrhyncha* and *C. boweri*); these savour strongly of a former genus-splitting era.

The author briefly states his views on the validity or otherwise of species within certain genera. An expansion of these opinions, supported by evidence, in subsequent papers would be welcome.

A most interesting record is the second Australian skin (from Tozer Gap) of *Microeca griseiceps* (*Eopsaltria kemp* of the *Checklist*). The specimen is figured in colour.

Three 'new' vernacular names are 'proposed'—Brown Goshawk (for *Accipiter fasciatus*), Pied Fantail (for *Rhipidura leucophrys*), and Yellow Flycatcher (for *Microeca griseiceps*). These are worthy of consideration by the R.A.O.U. Vernaculars Committee.

This paper is an important and intelligent contribution to the annals of North Queensland ornithology. It will help to expand our present meagre knowledge of the avifauna of an area which has strong biological affinities with New Guinea.—W.B.H.

Western Australian Ornithology.—In the *Western Australian Naturalist*, vol. 4, no. 3, December 1953, appears a taxonomic review by Ernst Mayr and Robert Wolk, 'The South-west Australian Races of the Spotted Scrub-Wren, *Sericornis maculatus*' (pp. 66-70). Five well-marked sub-species are recognized (the nominate *maculatus* from the wetter parts of the south-west corner, *balstoni* from the north and including the Sharks Bay region, *houtmanensis* from the

Abrolhos Islands, *condoni* from the south-east coastal areas, and *mondraimi* from the Recherche Archipelago). A sketch map illustrates the distribution of the races. In a paper on the ecology of a native land snail (*Bothriembryon*) from King's Park, A. R. Main and M. Carrigy refer to the selective predation of birds (probably the Western Magpie) in affecting the relative abundance in the area of two colour phases of *Bothriembryon bulla*. K. G. Buller has a note (*Strepera versicolor* feeding on *Bothriembryon*, pp. 70-71) describing the manner in which these birds feed on the snails. In vol. 4, no. 4, March 1954, E. H. M. Ealey contributes an article, 'Some Bird Observations made at the Abrolhos Islands' (pp. 73-74), which describes nesting of the Crested Tern, Red-tailed Tropic-bird and Lesser Noddy. Short items include 'Spotted Harrier at Busselton,' by (the late) Major H. M. Whittell; 'Incipient Song in Juvenile or Female Blue Wrens (*Malurus splendens*),' John Warham; 'Occurrence of Red-eared Firetail and Red-winged Wren in the Darling Ranges,' K. G. Buller (53 miles from Perth, along the Albany Highway, these represent probably the furthest inland records of the species); 'Wood Sandpipers at Lake Mungal,' John Warham; 'Diving of Musk Duck,' E. H. Sedgwick; and 'Birds recently established in the Central Wheatbelt,' L. E. Sedgwick.—D.L.S.

Oil Pollution.—The *Punch* cartoon of the gull expostulating to the soiled-clothing holiday-maker—"You, too? Perhaps they'll do something about it now"—has some reflection in the Report of Proceedings of the International Conference on Oil Pollution of the Sea, London, 1954. We biassed bird-folk naturally are concerned more with "ten thousand seabirds—found dead or dying on the beach" and such other forms of misery caused by that "most destructive animal the biological world has so far known"—man, than with spoilt beaches, but the assistance of all who will fight the practice of oil pollution should be aggregated. The 1953 conference adopted aims to require ships of all nations to refrain from discharging oil, and to stimulate measures for effective international action. The United Kingdom will take the initiative to call together the principal maritime nations to institute the proper measures.

The British Section of the International Committee has its headquarters at the British Museum. Its work should be encouraged and supported.—C.E.B.

National Museum History.—Whilst *Collections of a Century*, by R. T. M. Pescott, Director of the National Museum, may not be classed as an ornithological treatise, it is nevertheless of intense interest to ornithologists. The Museum has always been essentially a zoological institution, with birds well to the fore, and its remarkable collections and the zeal and determination of the men who secured them provide scope for an interesting historical essay. In particular, the wide vision of Sir Frederick McCoy, Director in an honorary capacity for over forty years, is clearly established by Mr. Pescott's concise account.

The vicissitudes of the early years are dealt with—Blandowski's expeditions, McCoy's financial worries and his continuous foresight, the gradual building up of collections beyond value. Of more recent times, our own times, we encounter references to the H. L. White Collection and other names familiar to us. The past, the present, and plans for the future are included. The book reflects, especially, the progress of recent years, the development of the more personal educational aspect, the establishment of local dioramas and life group exhibits.

Published by the Museum, price 30/-, this 186 pp. illustrated work (colour and half-tone) is a credit to author and the Trustees.—C.E.B.

The date of publication was June 6, 1954.