

The Status of the Subspecific Races of *Branta canadensis*, by J. D. Figgins, pp. 94-102.

This paper was suggested by H. Swarth's monograph on the subject (Cont. from Mus. Vert. Zool. Univ. of Cal.) It is proposed that *hutchinsi* and *occidentalis* be dropped as recognized sub-specific races of the Canada Goose and be regarded as hybrids between *canadensis* and *minima*, the latter being raised to full specific status. Remarks on this proposal will be found farther along in these reviews.

The Thirty-seventh Stated Meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union. By T. S. Palmer, pp. 110-125.

This was held Nov. 10-13, 1919, at the American Museum of Natural History, New York. Canada was well represented by three Fellows, one Member and two Associates. 247 Associates were elected, 14 of them from Canada.

In General Notes, p. 145, Jonathan Dwight under the heading, Nomenclatural Casuistry, takes exception to H. C. Oberholser's (Can. Field Nat., XXXIII, pp. 48-50) founding the name of his new race of Red-headed Woodpecker on an acknowledged *lapsus calami*. The use of the specific term *erythrophthalmus* instead of *erythrocephalus* in the original citation upon which Mr. Oberholser bases his name is plainly an error missed by the proof-reader. It is absurd to regard it as a serious nomenclatural fact. Such pedantic adherence to the letter of the law of priority should be discouraged.

Under Recent Literature,—

The Birds of Eastern Canada, by P. A. Taverner, is reviewed, pp. 147-149. As much commendation as the work is entitled to is given. Amongst the minor criticisms made by W. S. is but one on which the present writer would like some light. Mr. S. objects to the author's use of the term "type form, race or subspecies" as applied to the first described group of a given species. It would be gratifying to know how better to express the idea. Whilst first described races have no taxonomic superiority over those discovered later they have nomenclatural priority and as such are often to be referred to. It is unfortunate that the word "type" and "typical" have been given restricted and specialized meanings in zoology. The development of scientific concepts has twisted them from their obvious meaning and deprived us of very valuable words in their ordinary sense.

The Status of *Larus hyperboreus barrovianus*, by H. C. Oberholser. Proc. Biol. Soc. Wash., Vol. 32, pp. 173-174, reviewed p. 166.

It may be remembered that this author lately advocated the revival of the Point Barrow Gull as a

recognizable subspecies of the Glaucous Gull and that Dr. Dwight in a paper referred to in the previous volume of this journal advanced strong evidence to the contrary. This paper continues the argument. It resolves itself into the old question of what is a subspecies and upon how fine distinctions it can be founded. The writer has examined a considerable number of these north-western birds and recognizes that they do average smaller, though with so much individual variation and so many exceptions that few birds can be recognized with certainty without a knowledge of their geographical origin. It is a matter of opinion whether such races are worthy of nomenclatural recognition.

Under Notes and News,—

P. 186 is a brief report on the size and scope of the bird collections of the Victoria Memorial Museum, Ottawa.

P. 187 is a note on the progress of the Reports of the Canadian Arctic Expedition, 1913-18. As far as birds are concerned only a part on bird parasites (*Mallophaga*) and a few scattered identifications of invertebrate forms in bird stomachs have appeared, but Dr. R. M. Anderson expects to get the reports on Birds and Mammals out as soon as the pressure of his duties as editor of the whole series permits.

P. 188 informs us that the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology of the University of California has received from Miss Annie Alexander an endowment of \$200,000 for its maintenance. This institution has done in the past, and will do in the future, much valuable work within our borders in the course of its survey of west coast conditions. It is a matter of satisfaction on both sides of the line that the future usefulness of this able institution is assured.

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Additions to the Avifauna of the Pribilof Islands, Alaska, including Four Species New to North America, by G. Dallas Hanna, pp. 248-254. Mr. Hanna's residence upon these lonely oceanic islands has given him unusual opportunities for studying their bird life. Close to the dividing line between America and Asia, where the New and the Old Worlds come most nearly into contact, he has collected and observed many Old World stragglers and probably has added more species to our Check List than any other living man. The greatest importance of these technical additions to our avifauna lies in the possibility of their occurrence south along the continental coast and in suggesting species to be looked for there.

The Subspecies of *Branta canadensis* by H. S. Swarth, pp. 268-272. In this paper the perplexing subject of the Canada Goose and its races comes