

the open are naturally different from those of the woodlands; hence Manitoba has been taken as the western boundary of the zoological area dealt with in this book.

Although not a scientifically complete check-list of the birds of Eastern Canada, this book is nearly so. A few species whose Canadian status is doubtful, and some of extreme rarity or of accidental occurrence, have been disregarded. The utmost freedom has been used in this respect and species have been admitted freely upon the basis of expediency; some as being of probable occurrence and to be looked for, others as illustrating some point of general interest more pointedly than regular native species, and some because in the past they have been confused with commoner forms.

PLAN OF THE BOOK.

The systematic arrangement (see Classification, page 5, and nomenclature, page 7) used are those of the Check-list of the American Ornithologists' Union, third edition, 1910. Though this arrangement is acknowledged to be somewhat imperfect and its details tentative, it is that upon which most of the recent American bird literature is founded and is the one in common use in North America.

In the treatment of subspecies a departure has been made from current practice, which the writer believes to represent more accurately the facts of nature and modern concepts. Species have been treated as aggregations of subspecies, each of equal rank and importance, and not, as is customary, as species with subordinate sub-species dependent upon them. The species is first given as a whole, including its subspecific races, and under a subhead mention is made of the special subspecies that occur within the geographical scope of the work. This has caused no confusion or change except in the use of vernacular names in which the reader will find a few departures from those given and authorized by the American Ornithologists' Union. In the scientific nomenclature the true relative importance of species and subspecies has been expressed; but the common names have not heretofore always reflected this conception of subordination and this fact in many cases has caused the use of definite subspecific terms when it was by the very nature of the case impossible to determine their correctness or when it was inadvisable to recognize them. Thus there has been a tendency to attach unwarranted importance to these minor distinctions in popular as well as scientific estimation. In the correction of this condition certain adaptations of common names have been necessary, but as little change as possible from accepted practice has been made. Older terms have been revived wherever possible, but as current names have also been given no confusion should result. It has, in some cases, been necessary to apply the recognized type subspecific name to the whole species and adopt a new one for the form so robbed. In doing this it was advisable that as little change should be made in current usage as was consistent with the end in view. Therefore, except where good reasons prevented, the new subspecific name was formed by prefixing an adjective to the specific term hitherto applied to it. Each departure from accepted practice has been decided upon its own merits. Though there can be little doubt as to the advisability of the principle of the reform, the manner of carrying it out has been the subject of much thought, considerable consultation with others, and some hesitation in individual cases.