

PREFACE.

The purpose of this paper is to present a series of identifications of the species of fresh-water fishes described by Rafinesque in his "Ichthyologia Ohimensis" and elsewhere, made as a result of nearly three years of "field-work" in the region fished in by Rafinesque. In most cases, fresh specimens have been carefully compared with Rafinesque's accounts, and in the more difficult groups, as the *Cyprinidae*, *Catostomidae*, and *Centrarchidae*, I have taken a full series of the species known to occur in this region and compared Rafinesque's description with each specimen in turn, until one was reached which showed no serious discrepancy.

It is evident that many of Rafinesque's descriptions were drawn up from memory, and that his measurements were made by the eye, without the restraint of a tape-line. He indeed somewhere states that his collections were made in the summer and accounts written up for publication during the winter. As a result of this, the descriptions are often inexact, although usually striking. The numerous misprints in his work are also, in some cases, a source of confusion.

By making due allowance for these facts, and keeping in mind the proposition, unjustly controverted by some writers, that Rafinesque was not altogether a knave nor a fool, I have succeeded in identifying more or less satisfactorily, nearly all of his species, and in restoring to a number of his names their rightful priority.

The species still remaining unidentified are of two sorts: First, species really existing but not distinctively described, as *Luxilus interruptus*, *Rutilus compressus*, etc., in which no really tangible characters are given; and, second, those like *Aplocentrus calliops* and *Pogostoma leucops*, described at second hand from "drawings by Mr. Audubon", presenting, a grouping of characters applicable to no known fish.

It is not my purpose here to enter into any discussion of the merits of Rafinesque's work. That the *Ichthyologia* has been, and still is, a stumbling-block, is generally admitted. This is partly owing to errors of observation on the part of the author, partly to the admixture of statements derived from memory, imagination, or hearsay with statements of fact, and, finally, in no slight degree to the fact that Rafinesque's