

NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS.

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF MAMMALOGISTS.—The organization meeting of the American Society of Mammalogists was held in the New National Museum, Washington, D.C., April 3 and 4, 1919, with a charter membership of over two hundred and fifty, of whom sixty were in attendance at the meeting. The following officers were elected:

President, C. Hart Merriam (Washington); First Vice-President, E. W. Nelson (Washington); Second Vice-President, Wilfrid H. Osgood (Chicago); Recording Secretary, H. H. Lane (Oklahoma); Corresponding Secretary, Hartley T. H. Jackson (Washington); Treasurer, Walter P. Taylor (Washington). The Councilors are: Glover M. Allen (Cambridge); R. M. Anderson (Ottawa, Canada); J. Grinnell (Berkeley); M. W. Lyon (Washington); W. D. Matthew (New York); John C. Merriam (Berkeley); Gerrit S. Miller, Jr., (Washington); T. S. Palmer (Washington); Edward A. Preble (Washington); Witmer Stone (Philadelphia); and N. Hollister (Washington), Editor.

Committees were appointed on: Life Histories of Mammals, Charles C. Adams, Chairman; Study of Game Mammals, Charles Sheldon, Chairman; Anatomy and Phylogeny, W. K. Gregory, Chairman; and Bibliography, T. S. Palmer, Chairman.

The policy of the Society will be to devote its attention to the study of mammals in a broad way, including life histories, habits, evolution, palaeontology, relations to plants and animals, anatomy and other phases. The Society arranged to start the publication this year of a "Journal of Mammalogy," in which popular as well as technical matter will be presented. This journal will fill a long felt want in the natural history world, for with all the publications dealing with bird life on this hemisphere, there has been none making a specialty of the no less interesting and important mammalian life.

In choosing the name of the Society, the word American is used in the broad sense of including all the Americas, North as well as South. Canada was represented at the organization meeting by two men, and several Canadians appear among the charter members. The Society starts out democratically, with but one class of members, the general consensus of opinion being that the establishment of fellows and different classes of members would not be conducive to the good feeling and harmony desirable in a society of scientific aims. The Society invites the co-operation and support of all persons in the study and conservation of the mammalian life of America.

REMARKS CONCERNING SAND LAUNCES.—There has recently been received for identification by the Fisheries Branch of the Department of the Naval Service a number of small specimens of Sand Launce (*Ammodytes personatus*) obtained from Barclay and Clayoquot Sounds, British Columbia.

The genus *Ammodytes* is represented on our coasts by three reported species in all, and all of which inhabit sandy shores.

The geographical ranges of the three are as follows:

A. personatus: Shores of the Pacific from California to Alaska, embracing British Columbia and the Aleutian Islands and westward to Japan. (This is the species of which the Department received specimens.)

A. americanus: Maritime Provinces, Gaspe Basin, Labrador and Newfoundland, southward to Cape Hatteras, North Carolina.

A. dubius: Labrador and Greenland, southward to Cape Cod. (As its name implies this is a doubtful species, and was first recorded by Reinhardt in 1838.)

Altogether there are about eight different species of sand launces, of which, besides our own, may be mentioned *A. lanceolatus* and *A. tobianus*, both of which occur on the British coasts.

ANDREW HALKETT.

THE MOUNTAIN BLUE BIRD, AND ITS IRREGULAR APPEARANCE.—Every observer of birds has noticed the abundance or scarcity of certain varieties in different years, and the reason of this periodical variation in appearance is often hard to account for. There are several birds that come under this class in Alberta, and perhaps the most prominent of these is the Blue Bird, (ours is the Mountain variety *Sialia currucoides*.)

The winter of 1917-18 was quite severe up till about the middle of March, when it turned very mild and spring like. On the 21st of the month I was very much surprised to see three Blue Birds flying along the telephone wires on one of the principal streets of Camrose. This was fully two weeks earlier than I had ever recorded them before in my twenty-eight years residence in Alberta.

A few days later the weather turned suddenly cold, and the month ended with below zero temperatures. The cold extended into Montana, between 200 and 300 miles south of this latitude. There is reason to believe that these three birds were not the only ones to come north around the 21st of the month, and it is likely that a large migration took place at that time. The cold weather