For Sale at AUDUBON HOUSE, 155 Newbury St., Boston

BOOKS - BOOKS - BOOKS

We offer the best and latest books on Nature Lore, Natural Science, and Conservation, and Field Guides to all branches of Natural History, including all books reviewed in the Bulletin.

Members of the Massachusetts Audubon Society are entitled to a discount of ten per cent on most books (no discount if marked *).

An Introduction to Ornithology
George J. Wallace $8.00

A History of Birds
James Fisher 3.75

Practical Taxidermy
John W. Moyer 3.00

Woodmanship
Bernard S. Mason 1.75

Song of the Sky
An Exploration of the Ocean of Air
Guy Murchie 5.00

A New Item

A CONVENIENCE FOR BIRDERS

Bird Guide Index Tabs
* A Complete Set of Index Tabs for Peterson's "Field Guide to the Birds" 
Frederick K. Pough $0.50

The Web of Life:
A First Book of Ecology
John H. Storer 3.00

The Mating Instinct
Lorus J. & Margery T. Milne 4.50

These are easy to install, one tab for each plate, plastic coated, concise. Key words identify each plate.

Binoculars

Bausch and Lomb Binoculars with Coated Lenses. Cases included.
7 x 35 Zephyr-Light Binocular, central focus $170.50
8 x 30 Zephyr-Light Binocular, central focus 187.00
9 x 35 Zephyr-Light Binocular, central focus 187.00
7 x 50 Binocular, individual focus 192.50

6 x 30 Light Weight, central focus $29.70
7 x 35 Light Weight, central focus 54.45
8 x 30 Light Weight, central focus 55.00
7 x 50 Medium Weight, central focus 76.45

Prices include tax

LIFE HISTORIES OF CENTRAL AMERICAN BIRDS (Families Fringillidae, Thraupidae, Icteridae, Parulidae, and Corvidae). By Alexander F. Skutch. Cooper Ornithological Society, Pacific Coast Avifauna No. 31, Berkeley, California, March 25, 1954. Royal 8vo, 440 pages, with colored plate and text drawings by Don R. Eckleberry, plus photographs of scenery and habitats, in all 66 text figures, with a Foreword by Alexander Wetmore. $10.00.

This beautifully presented work is merely a momentary culmination of the author's distinguished life work begun in the Central American region in 1928, which has resulted in many important and notably well-written publications, which have deservedly brought the author worldwide recognition and an award of the Brewster Medal of the American Ornithologists' Union.

Most happily the Introduction gives us what many friends and admirers have long wanted to know, and that is a complete account of his wide travels in Central America from the high mountains of Guatemala to the lowlands of western Panama and the Canal Zone, in many varied faunal areas and every possible altitudinal life zone. These were mixed with quick trips to the United States for museum study and bibliographic research. With slender means, supported chiefly by the collection and sale of botanical specimens, and without any institutional support, Skutch stuck grimly to his self-appointed task and has become unwittingly the Audubon of tropical American bird study, wisely refusing to pigeonhole just yet again into the maelstrom of systematic museum collecting, but to try for something which all other field workers had never attempted — a veritable tour of tropical America!

The volume before us contains the biography, or life history, of forty species, divided among the five families of the "nine-primaried" Oiscines, or song birds, now the subject of extensive revision and proposed reclassification. Easily and clearly written, the text contains a truly marvelous wealth of comparative illustration, and tropical birds are freely compared to what is known of their northern allies. This is best brought out in five sections entitled General Summary of Information on each family. It will introduce the reader to some of the chief problems, or biological mysteries, of tropical birds.

1. Why is nesting success so poor; 2) why do the nesting and incubation periods last longer; 3) why is the egg clutch usually less; and 4) why is the breeding season so irregular or so protracted? M. Skutch has given considerable time and thought to revising or inventing English common names, usually with happy results, as his acquaintance with other species of the genus is so wide. Nevertheless, it must
BOOK REVIEWS, cont.

be admitted that diagnostic or attributive names cannot be found for every species or generic group of tropical American birds, and, happily, the Index supplies the Latin name, so that a pedant like me can find out what bird the author is talking about!

The author and publisher are to be congratulated for a splendid job well done, and it is devoutly to be hoped that means will be found to publish two more volumes of life histories, which the author says he now has in manuscript.

L. LOW GRISCOM