

such as increasing warm effluents from industry into lakes and rivers, and growing pollution from sewage and other works, are telling against trout, with their high oxygen requirements, and those who fish for them, though some of these changes may be favourable to the more numerous and socially important group of anglers for coarse fish. But all anglers alike should realise that of all predators "the angler remains the most persistent and efficient, and he would do well to remember that in his attempts to conserve his prey". He should remember it also in his general relationship with and conduct towards all the wildlife of our rivers, lakes and ponds.

HURCOMB

Birds of the Atlantic Islands, Volume III: A History of the Birds of the Azores, by **David Armitage Bannerman** and **W. Mary Bannerman**. Oliver & Boyd, 84s.

Ireland's Birds, by **Robert F. Ruttledge**. Witherby, 30s.

The final volume of the Bannermans' trilogy adds the Azores to their previous work on the Canaries and Madeira. Both text and plates, by David Reid-Henry and the late George Lodge, are well up to the high standard for accuracy set by the two preceding volumes. Besides the usual systematic lists of breeding and migratory species, there are excellent essays on the birds of the individual islands in the group, some by Colonel Jose Agostinho and other local ornithologists. One notes with regret that the house sparrow, introduced into the islands by soldiers a few years ago, shows every sign of becoming established. The Azores being well out into the Atlantic, the presence of a number of American vagrants on their list is to be expected; nobody seems to have objected that they might have had an assisted passage. This is not a book for the pocket, but no bird-watcher visiting the Azores could afford to leave it at home.

Major Ruttledge was part-author of the authoritative *Birds of Ireland*, published in 1954. In the present book he summarises and brings up-to-date the great mass of knowledge about Irish birds that has accumulated since then, especially in the annual *Irish Bird Reports*, together with essays by local specialists such as Jimmy Deane. The main part of the book, however, is a straight systematic list which will be of the greatest value to both resident and visiting bird watchers; moreover it is small and light enough to carry comfortably in a knapsack. One notes that the inhibitions which still prevent British ornithologists from accepting as genuine those American vagrants which arrived before about 1950 do not prevent Irish ones from listing the slate-coloured junco shot in Co. Clare in May, 1905.

RICHARD FITTER

The Bird Faunas of Africa and its Islands, by **R. E. Moreau**, Academic Press, £5.

Not many books deserve the epithet 'monumental', but here is one that does. It is built out of 20 years of field experience and intensifying study of two very different samples of Africa—the north-eastern margins of the Sahara and the forested Usambara—buttressed by contacts with (and stimulation of) every identifiable ornithologist in the Continent, and completed by 20 more years of research—the listed references comprise 386 titles, not counting the author's own very remarkable three dozen.

The presentation of this half-a-life's work is beautifully logical, and this, with the extensive use of tables to summarise the mass of data, prevents it from becoming too taxing on the digestion, despite the fact, for example, that some 800 of the 1,481 species credited to the region receive individual mention. This makes it easy to dip into or refer back to particular chapters with understanding



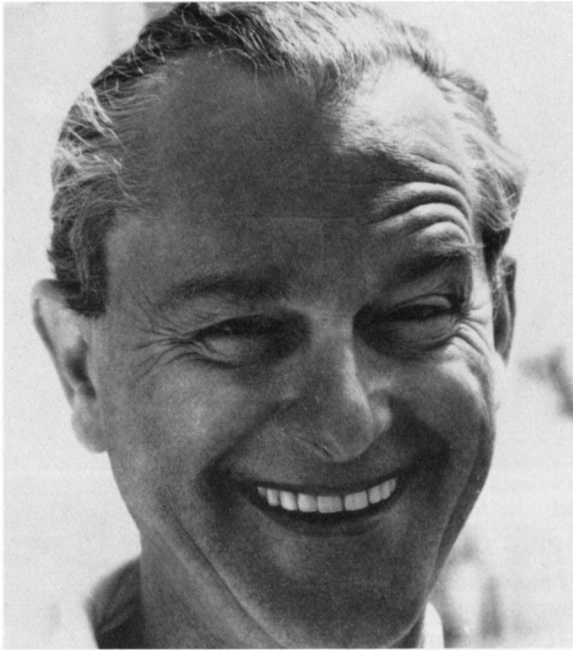
WHOOPING CRANES

Plate 17 above: An adult bird alighting.

Plate 18: One of four whooping crane chicks reared this year, at the US Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, from eggs taken in the wild. See the Note on page 173.

Luther C. Goldman





I've had eleven glorious days going to South Africa.
I've had a good eight hours' sleep every night.
I've eaten three marvellous meals a day.
I've had drinks before—drinks during—and
drinks after.
I've talked to people who've listened.
I've listened to people who've talked.
I've read more books than I've done for years.
I've walked the decks, sniffed ozone by the
bucketful, danced, played bridge, improved my
putting, taken four hundred feet of cine-film, seen
the bluest sky imaginable, and sun-tanned myself
brown instead of my usual brick-red.
I fully intend to spend some weeks having a
glorious time in South Africa, too.

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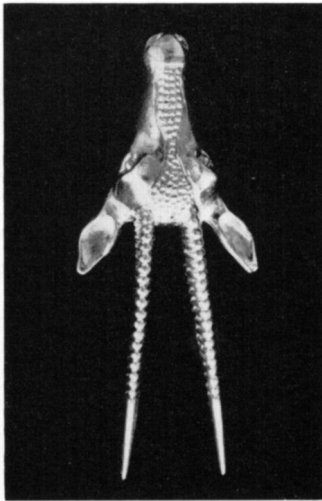
'Study of a Dormouse'

Archibald Thorburn, F.Z.S.

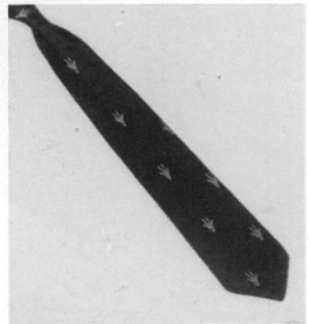
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and profit, especially as the whole thread of the argument and salient points are conveniently recapitulated in the conclusion. Briefly, then, after setting the geological, climatic and vegetational scene and discussing the major subdivisions of the avifauna (forest and open country, montane and lowland), the book goes on to analyse its main features—endemism and affinities, qualitative differences according to geographical and environmental distribution, migrations within the continent and to and from the Palaearctic, ending with a review of the special and significant problems of the land-bird faunas of the islands round Africa.

Mr. Moreau himself suggests that his themes boil down to “the mutability of the whole biological scene” and “the problem of the nature of species comprising a bird fauna, whether of a continental area, of an island or of a vegetation community”. These themes and their exposition are of very considerable value and interest to readers concerned with the conservation of Africa’s fauna, and also to the great majority who can hope at most to have only brief and occasional glimpses of the wealth of Africa’s bird life. Secondly, it becomes clear, in the light of the two themes, that observations of the most casual and infrequent visitor to the Continent, even his ‘List’ for any given area (provided always that it is accompanied by adequate and, preferably, quantitative data), can still make a significant contribution to filling the gaps and clarifying details—the need for which is constantly emphasised in this book.

Fifteen drawings by Robert Gillmor add embellishment and there are about the same number of well-chosen (but in two instances mis-captioned) photographs of habitat-types. Numerous maps are used to illustrate distributional points of every kind, and in some cases would have done so much more clearly if three instead of two colours had been used. However, the lay-out and production in general allows the book to be readily used as the treasure-house that it is.

HUGH ELLIOTT

A Field Guide to the Birds of New Zealand, by R. A. Falla, R. B. Sibson and E. G. Turbott. Collins, 36s.

Since the first pioneer effort, on the oceans, by W. B. Alexander, illustrated pocket field guides to bird identification, distribution and habits have spread first over North America and Europe and more recently to several other parts of the world. In some recent cases however ornithological knowledge is still too superficial and fragmentary to afford the depth and precision of the best models. Fortunately, New Zealand, with its compact area and avifauna and its fine team of resident ornithologists, forms an exception to this trend, and in depth and accuracy this latest Field Guide measures up to the highest standards.

Although the extinction, under Polynesian pressures, of over twenty forms of flightless moa was an ornithological catastrophe, followed in the nineteenth century by widespread destruction of native forests, uncontrolled shooting and indiscriminate introduction, outright extinctions have been fewer than is sometimes supposed, the unhappy exception this century being the huia. The authors, however, thoughtfully provide a full description of it, just in case even sixty years after its last known occurrence some lucky ornithologist may yet be able to emulate with it Dr. Orbell’s rediscovery in 1948 of the takahe *Notornis mantelli*.

It is satisfactory to learn that “very few native species are now in serious danger of extinction, the elusive kakapo being perhaps an exception”. Fortunately New Zealand is rich in offshore islands, a number of which have during the past seventy years become sanctuaries, and, although the battle for conservation continues there with no less noise and fury than anywhere else, any further setbacks will not be through lack of vigilance or resolution on the part of New Zealand conservationists, among whom the book’s authors have played a valiant and effective role.