



REVIEWS

The Birds of Hareshawmuir. By Richmond Paton. (Kilmarnock : "Standard" Office). 4s. net.

IN his preface to this little work the author states that it is his desire and ambition to write the full story of the birds of Ayrshire, but that he feels it safer for the present to confine his records to the smaller area within the county with which he is most familiar. This sectional work being now accomplished, and very satisfactorily we think, it is hoped that Mr. Paton will carry out his ambition with regard to the larger work, which is very much wanted. The book before us is really a second edition slightly revised, the first having been privately issued a year before.

Mr. Paton gives a good and careful account of the status of each species and adds a good many interesting data of movements and migrations as well as of breeding and other habits observed within his area. His work shows considerable care and is usually free from statements which seem to require substantiation. Under Eagle-Owl we find the withdrawal of a supposed occurrence in December, 1915 (see *Brit. Birds*, Vol. IX., p. 216), Mr. Paton now considering that the bird was really a Short-eared Owl magnified by mist. The statement that Swallows fledged in the middle of September in all probability perished in migration seems uncalled for in view of the fact that Swallows regularly occur on passage until the end of October. The interesting fact that no less than three subspecies of Song-Thrushes have occurred in this small district has already been recorded in these pages (Vol. XVII., p. 165; XIX., p. 175).

Mr. Paton is to be congratulated on a very useful little addition to our local avifaunas.

Transactions of the Norfolk and Norwich Naturalists' Society. 1924-25. Vol. XII. Part 1.

IN last year's Transactions of this well-known Society there are several items of interest and importance to ornithologists. As a result of an agreement with the local fishermen, who had passed a resolution that the protection of Terns at Blakeney Point had resulted in material loss to them, an investigation into the precise food of the Terns during the breeding season was undertaken. With the sanction of the authorities concerned, two Common Terns per week were shot as well as in all six Little Terns and nine Sandwich Terns. These were sent to Dr. W. E. Collinge, the result of whose investigation is here given in admirable form. Dr. Collinge summarizes his results by stating that the food of the Common Tern at Blakeney Point consists of 40.32 per cent. of fish, of which 25.48 per cent. is food fishes and 14.84 per cent. sand-eels. Species identified were whiting, haddock, herring and whitebait, all of which occur in prodigious numbers. Taking the three species of Tern together, the averages of the food eaten were:—Food fishes 19.60 per cent., sand-eels 16.54 per cent. and the remainder crustaceans, annelids, marine molluscs and insects. No trace was found in any stomach of flat fish, the diminution of which was the main cause of the enquiry.

Other papers of interest are:—"Norfolk Heronries," in which Dr. B. B. Riviere has given as complete a list as possible of existing Norfolk Heronries and the numbers in each; "The Swan-Roll in the Norwich Castle Museum," by Dr. N. F. Ticehurst, and "The Norwich Corporation Swan-herd's return for 1925," by Dr. S. H. Long; Report of the Committee on "Wild Bird Protection in Norfolk in 1925," which contains some valuable notes by Miss Turner on the spring migration as observed at Scolt Head; and "The Colour of the Iris in the Hawfinch," in which Mr. R. J. Howard states that in 1884 he found the colour in the live bird was "madder-brown," which varied in intensity by the rapid dilation and contraction of the pupil, and only on death became greyish-white. This observation, by Mr. Howard, which doubtless gives the correct colour of the iris of the Hawfinch, is quoted, it may be remembered, in Mitchell's *Birds of Lancashire*, 2nd Ed., 1892, p. 66.