

REVIEWS.

Report of the Oxford Ornithological Society on the Birds of Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire, 1927. Edited by B. W. Tucker, M.A., M.B.O.U. 1s. 6d.

THIS Report bears evidence of increased activity and great keenness on the part of the members. We note that an intensive study on ecological lines has been commenced and is to be continued and we shall look forward with interest to the results of this much needed work. In conjunction with this, the co-operative ringing scheme, already described in these pages (Vol. XXI., pp. 290-4), has made a very useful beginning and, though details are not yet available, the whole scheme of investigations appears to be on lines which should produce valuable results.

The report on the birds of the three counties is full of good observation, well and critically edited. We may note that more observers are required, especially for S.W. Oxon., S.W. and E. Berks., and a considerable part of Bucks., and should any of our readers be able to help they should write to Mr. Tucker at the University Museum. Amongst the many notes appearing in this Report are the following:—

SISKIN (*Carduelis spinus*).—One would appear to have bred in an alder copse near Headington (Oxon.), but the evidence, though strong, is not quite conclusive.

GARDEN-WARBLER (*Sylvia borin*).—One was observed closely on Otmoor (Oxon.) on March 20th. The bird appeared to be injured and was in the same locality two hours after it was first seen. This is a remarkably early date.

BEE-EATER (*Merops apiaster*).—One was seen by Mr. A. H. Cocks in Buckinghamshire near Henley, in the last week of October.

ROLLER (*Coracias g. garrulus*).—One was shot at Eton (Berks.) on May 28th.

MANX SHEARWATER (*Puffinus p. puffinus*).—One taken alive on September 17th at Bradenham House appears to be the first record for Buckinghamshire.

There are a number of interesting notes on ducks and waders, and a good many observations on the Crossbill irruption additional to those which have already appeared in our pages.

Wildfowl and Waders, Nature and Sport in the Coastlands. Depicted by the late Frank Southgate, R.B.A., and described by Hugh B. C. Pollard. (Country Life.) £3 3s.

THIS is a large quarto volume containing sixteen plates in colour and forty-eight in monochrome, reproduced from drawings by the late Frank Southgate. The monochrome plates are to our mind by far the more successful, and many of them are delightful, and although some of the coloured plates make nice pictures, the birds have often a hard, yet unfinished, appearance. Many of the scenes depicted are on the Norfolk coast, and the book will appeal especially to those who are familiar with the sand-dunes and marshes in the neighbourhood of Wells. Many ornithologists are or have been keen wildfowlers, and they will enjoy Southgate's pictures and Mr. Pollard's pleasantly written pages. Mr. Pollard has also something to say about collectors, but, like so many popular writers, he does not distinguish between those who collect with the object of acquiring knowledge and those who collect merely to acquire the beautiful or rare.

The Geographical Distribution and Status of Birds in Scotland. By Evelyn V. Baxter and Leonora Jeffrey Rintoul. (Oliver & Boyd.) 15s. net.

THE plan of this work is quite original. To each species a whole page is devoted, a very brief general statement of its status being given at the top, while the rest of the page is devoted to a list of faunal areas, sub-divided into counties or parts of counties. The status of the bird is indicated in each sub-division by one or more initial letters signifying resident, summer visitor, winter visitor, passage migrant, occasional visitor, occasional in summer but has not been proved to breed, occasional winter visitor, occasional passage migrant. When necessary are added such notes as "used to breed," "has bred," "rare," "a few," etc., while to very rare visitors a reference to the record of its first appearance is given. If there is no record for a county the county itself is invariably inserted with a blank space. The book is thus very conveniently arranged for those who desire to know the status of any bird in Scotland, and its use should lead to a great increase of our knowledge on the subject, for there are a very large number of blanks, a good many of which could doubtless be filled in by more observation, and many others straight away from observations already made, but left unrecorded for want of such a guide as this. A map is provided, but this unfortunately is not sufficiently large or detailed to show exactly where the boundaries of the various areas fall. The nomenclature employed is like that of the *Practical Handbook*. At the end of the book a number of pages with the faunal divisions set out are provided for additional species. Corrections and additions and excluded species are to be found in appendices, and a sufficient index completes a very useful working book, both for those who live in Scotland and for those who visit that country.