

AUDUBON SOCIETY MEMBERS !

Compare this pamphlet with the report of the Hamlin-Barbour Investigating Committee of August 19th, 1931.

A CRISIS IN CONSERVATION

Serious Danger of Extinction Of Many North American Birds

If bird students and nature lovers are led by self-congratulatory reports of bird protection organizations or by the deplorable and astonishing indifference to bird destruction and extermination that scientific and ornithological associations exhibit, to suppose that all is going well with our native birds, they are due to get a rude awakening before many years have passed. Effective protection for our song and insectivorous birds against willful destruction may be nearly an accomplished fact, and the former wholesale sacrifice of bird life for millinery purposes has ended, permanently we hope, as far as this country is concerned. In all other cases our success is far from complete; in many cases there has been no success at all and no sincere effort is being made to achieve any. The results that we are paying for we do not get, and the outlook for the long survival of many of our most beautiful and most conspicuous and most interesting native birds has become a poor one. The earnestness, activity and efficiency which characterized our bird protection efforts and our organizations for that purpose during the early years of the present century has not been maintained.

LET US FACE THE FACTS NOW RATHER THAN ANNIHILATION OF MANY OF OUR NATIVE BIRDS LATER

Factors destructive to bird life increase almost from day to day, but appeals and protests many times repeated have not had the slightest effect on the complacent inertia and perfunctory routine of those to whom the public has been intrusting bird protection work and bird protection money, and what is vastly more serious, the responsibility for the future existence of a large part of our American bird fauna. This pamphlet has therefore been printed for distribution not to the public in general, but especially to those who are giving evidence of their interest in our native birds by membership in organizations for bird study, nature study and wild life protection and, most of all, to those who are making contributions for bird protection work. The remedy is in their hands.

THE SITUATION WITH WHICH WE HAVE TO DEAL

With the surprising increase of popular interest in nature study that the last few years have shown and with sums of money available that the pioneers in bird protection work of a generation ago did not ever hope for, results have grown less instead of greater. The expenditure of public funds

Bernard P. Brennan 6/20/32

for bird protection has come more and more under political domination, certain important sportsmen's organizations and magazines have become commercialized and passed to no small extent into the control of firearms and ammunition makers, and organized bird protection activities are in large part managed by professional conservationists who are in the game for what there is in it for themselves, and to whom actual results in saving our bird fauna are of little interest. Occasional splurges of ineffective activity and interminable advertisement of themselves and their organizations to maintain a continual flow of money into their treasuries occupies their time, and exaggerated overhead expenses and solicitation of more contributions consume the money given for bird protection.

The last ten years can show but one really big forward step in bird protection, the Norbeck Game Refuge Bill just passed, but it will take years more to get these refuges established and in service.

SOME AMERICAN BIRDS ALREADY DOOMED TO EXTINCTION

Some of these could undoubtedly have been saved by earnest, intelligently directed efforts if begun ten years ago. Shall we permit the list to become longer? Before considering the more important aspects of the situation let us glance rapidly over the condition of some of these species. Of the American avifauna now as extinct as the Dodo, we have the Great Auk, Labrador Duck, Passenger Pigeon, Carolina Paroquet. Also probably the Eskimo Curlew, Heath Hen (one surviving individual reported a short time ago.)

OTHER BIRDS BEYOND SAVING

How soon the following species will join the brotherhood of ghosts it is not pleasant to contemplate.

Whooping Crane

The largest of the North American wading birds. Plumage white with black wing quills; extent of wings nearly eight feet. Formerly found over much of North America. But few individuals now remain alive.

Trumpeter Swan

The largest of the wild swans. Plumage white; extent of wings eight to ten feet. Formerly found over a large part of North America. Now few individuals remain alive.

Ivory-billed Woodpecker

By far the largest and handsomest of the woodpeckers. Length about twenty inches, with black and white plumage and a scarlet crest in the male. Frequented the cypress swamps in the southern states and has disappeared with the logging off of the cypresses. Bird collectors will doubtless account for the few remaining individuals.

California Condor

An immense but inoffensive bird closely related, and little inferior in size, to the Condor of the Andes. Formerly common enough in the mountains of Southern California and adjacent parts of Mexico. Its almost complete extinction seems to have been brought about by the eating of carcasses poisoned to destroy wolves. As this poisoning practice has not been discontinued the hope of saving the California Condor is very remote.

Flamingo

Two or three colonies survive in the West Indies, but the end of this species is near.

Golden Plover

Hudsonian Godwit

Buff-breasted Sandpiper

Upland Plover

These last four are birds whose protection is rendered especially difficult by their very extensive migrations. There appears to be little hope for their long survival.

THOSE POSSIBLY WITHIN THE REALM OF SAVING

To most or all the above species, then, we may have to wave good-bye. There is no use plugging the leak with the barrel empty. Let it warn us to attend to those birds still numerous enough so that by careful protection and by provision of the necessary safe and suitably adapted refuges, feeding grounds and breeding places there may be some hope of recovery for them.

Among those already in actual (and in some cases very serious) danger of extinction unless more effective protection is given are the

Little Brown Crane
Sandhill Crane
Sage Grouse
White Pelican
Marbled Godwit
Long-billed Curlew
Emperor Goose
Spectacled Eider
Mississippi Kite
Whistling Swan
Bald Eagle
Avocet
Yellow-billed Magpie
Woodcock
Wild Turkey
Great White Heron

There are also a number of birds that are more or less in danger of extermination as inhabitants of the United States or Canada though, having a wider distribution, some of them have a better chance of survival, for a time at least, in other countries. Among such species are the following:

Snowy Heron
Limpkin
White-tailed Kite
Golden Eagle
Swallow-tailed Kite
Common Cormorant
Gannet
Black-necked Stilt
Everglade Kite
Duck Hawk

OTHER BIRDS IN NEED OF BETTER PROTECTION

After mentioning all of the above we find that a still greater number (including a very considerable proportion of our larger birds and most of the game birds) have a most unsatisfactory outlook for the future if the situation be examined critically and impartially. A species whose numbers diminish from year to year or which becomes, as time goes on, restricted to a smaller and smaller geographical area (even though its abundance be maintained in some of the places from which it has not yet disappeared) or one whose opportunities for breeding are being lessened, is on the road to extinction, unless the causes that are bringing about these effects are discovered and remedied.

The list of our native birds which now come under this category is too long to give in detail, but it includes many or most of the following kinds of birds as well as some that for lack of space cannot be discussed here.

GROUSE AND RELATED BIRDS

First, the inland game birds, the Grouse and Ptarmigan, Quail, and their larger relative the Wild Turkey. These are the birds to suffer first from the extension of good roads into the wilder or less densely inhabited districts and the resulting settling up of the country and occupation of their former haunts by human dwellings. With seven million licensed hunters turned loose every fall (not to mention those who kill without licenses) we do not see how it can fail to be clear to everybody that any long continuance of the present comparatively unrestricted hunting will grow more and more disastrous to the birds every year, and that nature will put a stop to it forever—by the extinction of the birds—if laws and common sense do not do so before it is too late. The introduction and artificial propagation of

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semi-domesticated, poultry-like birds such as the ring-necked pheasant, in order to provide something to shoot at is no compensation for the splendid native species we are losing through our neglect.

SHORE BIRDS AND RAIL

Turning to the shore birds (plover, snipe, etc.) we may call attention to the fact that several of them have already been named as species extinct or in danger of becoming so. Others of this group have been showing an encouraging tendency to increase since removed from the list of game birds and protected by law at all seasons, in spite of the fact that, until a couple of years ago the laws relating to them were very difficult of enforcement. So long as a few species of shore birds were allowed to be shot the entire family was bound to suffer, as not one gunner in twenty, or any much larger proportion of game wardens, is able to distinguish the protected from the unprotected birds. Indeed, all kinds of shore birds from little sandpipers to curlews were killed under the claim that they were Yellowlegs or Black-breasted or Golden Plovers*, the species not protected. Since all shore-bird shooting is at present illegal in this country and there is now no excuse for gunning along the beaches during the migrations of these birds, it is to be hoped that the relentless persecution the flocks of these gentle and confiding little creatures were subjected to, wherever they alighted to feed and rest during the long migrations they perform, will be a thing of the past, in this country at least. Few of them were larger or swift-flying enough or even wary enough to be properly treated as game birds, and the shooting into flocks of them was a form of "sport" so cruel and so degraded and so indefensible that the government is to be complimented on having at last put an end to its legalization, temporarily anyhow. Let us hope the ban on it will be permanent.

It is to be hoped that the rail family, every one of them, will before long be excluded from the list of game birds. These slow-flying and none too intelligent birds have decreased tremendously, not only from the shooting to which they have been subjected but also as a result of the draining of swamps and marshes to which they are confined. As game birds they have little to recommend them, especially since their present reduced numbers and legal restrictions now prevent the great bags of them that sportsmen used to take pride in. The Gallinules and the Coot, likewise members of this family, are more ducklike in habits than true rails, but are too stupid and slow-flying to be creditable game for anyone but a small boy. None of the members of this family seem to have been anywhere near holding their own in numbers or in area actually frequented for a great many years past—a warning that should not be too long disregarded by the government.

* Why the Golden Plover, a bird that was almost extinct thirty years and which has been making a brave fight for survival ever since, should have been one of the species selected by the government to be deprived of protection has never been explained by those who know. It was one of the two or three kinds most in need of it. Neither has it been explained why some years later when the international treaty for protecting migratory birds was drawn up and the law for its enforcement drafted, the Golden Plover was still excepted from protection, and was never put on the protected list till 1925.

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DUCKS AND GEESE

The problem of protecting the migratory wild fowl, the wild ducks and geese, was complicated and action delayed for years by the efforts of a certain important sportsmen's association, and by government officials who hoped to control the spending of the money to raise two or three million dollars a year by requiring from all hunters a federal license in addition to the state license if they wished to shoot migratory birds. The new imposition on sportsmen was naturally resented, and to sugar-coat the dose the scheme of providing public shooting grounds with a part of the money so raised was proposed. Without discussing the abstract question whether providing public shooting grounds is either a desirable or proper function of our government, it will suffice to point out that the outlook for the migratory waterfowl is at present so bad that such government encouragement and assistance for their slaughter that publicly maintained shooting grounds would provide is not only unjustified, but that it would soon defeat any benefit the sportsmen might derive from such a policy.

The improvement in numbers of certain of these birds that followed the stopping of market hunting, through forbidding the sale of game and strict regulation of interstate commerce in game, and through putting an end to spring shooting, is now being *more than offset by the destruction of the chief breeding grounds* of the migratory wild fowl on the extensive marshes and lakes in the northern parts of North America, chiefly in British territory. Those regions are now penetrated by railroads and highways and are becoming more and more thickly settled. The marshes are being drained for agricultural purposes and farmhouses or towns occupy the lake shores where ducks and geese formerly bred.

Not only in their breeding grounds in the North, but throughout the western United States, are these birds met by similar problems resulting from drainage and the consumption of all the water for irrigation purposes. Marshes, ponds and lakes always were scarce in western North America. Now over large areas they simply do not exist, and where any are left they are often only death traps for the birds, either because crowded into the few available places wholesale slaughter by gunners is made easy, or because the birds are destroyed by alkali or lead poisoning in the contracted, polluted and drying-up lake and marshes.

WEALTHY GAME CLUBS AND SPORTSMEN OF LEISURE A MENACE

In the eastern United States there is fortunately no dearth of water or of fairly good feeding grounds, but here the danger is chiefly due to the acquirement of the best feeding and wintering places for wild fowl by shooting clubs composed of wealthy men or private individuals having the means to pay well to gratify their taste for shooting and plenty of it. Here the birds are baited until they frequent the preserves in large numbers and become tame. Then the slaughter begins. There is not necessarily any violation of the laws for the bag limits (15 birds per day; lately 25 in many

states) are large enough to account for immense slaughter even when they are not exceeded. A comparatively few wealthy men with time and money on their hands, who spend as much as possible of the year in the killing of one kind of game or another, travelling to where the seasons are open and the opportunities for slaughter are best, are accounting for more destruction of game of all kinds both furred and feathered than a hundred times their numbers of ordinary sportsmen who only occasionally have a day's shooting. Such undesirable individuals, who violate no laws (perhaps), but take advantage of them in every possible way, and get a dozen or a hundred times their share of the game, are one of the big problems of game protection at the present time. If such people are not decent enough to obtain their amusement in some less destructive way it is time for the law to intervene and compel them to. Greatly reduced bag limits, not only daily limits but *seasonal limits*, and closer supervision of the big shooting preserves to enforce them, are the only solution that appears possible. Public shooting grounds and shooting for the poor man are a delusion. *The private preserves have taken up all the best localities.* Does anyone suppose they will be given up for the enjoyment of the poor man? And if the government should acquire any of them they should be made game refuges, not public shooting grounds.

WILD GOOSE CONDITIONS IN CALIFORNIA AS REPORTED IN "CALIFORNIA FISH AND GAME," THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE CALIFORNIA STATE GAME COMMISSION, JANUARY, 1929, PAGE 50

"It has only been in recent years that any protection whatsoever has been given geese. Years after there were bag limits on ducks no limit was set on geese. Finally, with numbers greatly reduced, the federal government lessened the bag limit. The restrictions however have not satisfactorily handled the situation. In the Sacramento Valley there are a number of licensed commercial clubs where organized destruction is practiced. The owner loads onto a truck about two hundred and fifty wild geese decoys. These wing-clipped birds are placed in enclosures out in a field. A group of ten hunters, along with a professional, hide themselves in pits. A flock of geese is attracted and upon signal from the professional hunter, ten men rise from the pits and blaze away. Oftentimes every member of a flock falls victim to the barrage. No hunter knows whether he killed a particular goose or whether his neighbor shot it. After sufficient geese have been killed to furnish each man with a bag limit of eight, firing is stopped and the geese are collected." The article goes on to state that for several years the State Division of Fish and Game has been trying to have the legislature pass a law prohibiting the use of live decoys in the hunting of geese, but that in each instance the movement was blocked by professional hunters of the district. If the use of such decoys cannot be terminated it is to be hoped that the present bag limit may be greatly reduced.

MANY SPECIES OF DUCKS APPROACHING THE DANGER POINT

There is another feature in regard to the situation of the wild ducks and geese that has not yet been touched upon. While a number of them are wary and clever birds and usually sufficiently able to outwit the sportsman so as to maintain themselves in considerable numbers (the Black Duck, Mallard, the two Scaup Ducks, the Canada Goose and a few others come in this class) there are many beautiful species such as the Wood Duck, Baldpate, Bufflehead, the three species of teal, the Ruddy Duck and others* which are far less able to take care of themselves and which have already become rare throughout much of their former range, to such an extent in the case of some of them that their actual extinction needs to be guarded against without delay.

But to most sportsmen these are nothing but ducks. Many gunners do not know or care to know much about the different species so long as they can shoot at something. If all the rarer species should become extinct they might care little as long as enough of the common ones remained to provide animated targets.

Yet to thousands of nature lovers interested in our wild birds, to ornithologists, and to all except those who look upon our wild fowl merely as fodder for their shotguns, these rarer species have a great interest. To leave the initiative and care for the protection of these and other game birds entirely to the sportsmen, as a considerable element among the latter claim should be done, will certainly be to abandon a large number of the rarer species of our native avifauna to extinction.

SPORTSMEN AS BIRD PROTECTORS

It is often asserted that the sportsmen deserve the credit for our laws for the conservation of game and that but for them we would have no protective laws for birds and other wild creatures, also that the protection of game of all kinds should be left to them, and that nature students and bird lovers should not interfere in matters concerning game birds.

We do not deny that bird protection began with the sportsmen but their purpose is not, and never has been, any other than to have birds to kill for their own sport.

They have been making poor work of it. The laws they have had enacted and their methods are *always behind in the race with extinction*. How effectively did they preserve the Passenger Pigeon? What has been happening to the Woodcock, the Ruffed Grouse, the Sage Grouse, the Cranes and Swans and many other important game birds during all these years?

* The kinds of ducks that are becoming rare are mostly birds of comparatively small size, and a law protecting the smaller species of ducks would be quite practicable, for even those by whom other differences would pass unnoticed can recognize difference in size and spare the smaller birds. The Wood Duck, one of the most beautifully plumaged of all birds, has for some years been protected and with good results. Its somewhat different haunts and habits from most of our other ducks has made this easier, but it is time that the protection should be extended to the other smaller species.

Wholesale and indiscriminate slaughter by sportsmen of many of our finest non-game birds goes on, and is encouraged by incessant propaganda. We may mention as an instance the destruction of birds of prey by the abominably cruel method of a steel trap set on a pole. The majority of the hawks and owls thus caught are of species of great economic value as destroyers of injurious rodents, large insects, etc., aside from the fact that many other harmless or useful birds are destroyed, in violation of state and federal laws. Largely on humane grounds the pole trap has been outlawed in Great Britain for years, but except by a single state bird protection organization no effort has been made to arouse public opinion against the practice in this country.

And must we now stand by without protest or interference and let the Bald Eagle, the Duck Hawk, the harmless and useful Red-tailed and Red-shouldered Hawks, the beautiful little Pigeon Hawk and many others of our native species be wiped out under the preposterously unjust pretense that they are the cause of the present decrease in game? The birds of prey that are really to blame have no feathers, and do not fly except in airplanes. Fanatical propaganda cannot keep the public from understanding this much longer.

DEMORALIZATION OF OUR BIRD PROTECTION SOCIETIES

Organizations for bird protection no longer have to contend with the general indifference and often ill-concealed hostility of a generation ago. The public and the newspapers and magazines are with them and members and money are no longer hard to obtain. The public wants bird protection and is willing to pay for it; in fact it is paying for it, and it has not yet waked up to how little it is getting for its money.

The following figures are taken from the annual reports of one of our bird protection organizations:

Year	Receipts (1.)	Disbursements	Cash balance at end of year
1917	\$163,738.31	\$135,894.37	\$27,843.94
1918	149,179.22	122,722.38	26,456.84
1919	163,843.68	123,201.26	40,642.42
1920	194,647.92	151,187.61	43,460.31
1921	196,035.24	153,029.21	43,005.83
(2.) 1922	178,131.00	137,337.04	40,793.96
1923	216,620.16	187,351.86	29,268.30
1924	229,891.54	197,304.49	32,587.05
1925	243,974.35	199,048.73	44,865.62
1926	302,148.76	222,861.54	79,861.54
(3.) 1927	313,071.80	184,939.97	(4.) 128,131.83
Total	\$2,351,281.90	\$1,814,878.46	

Notes: (1.) Including cash on hand at beginning of year.
 (2.) In addition a donation of \$200,000 was received for endowment.
 (3.) In addition to the receipt of a special endowment fund totaling \$157,299.43.
 (4.) \$100,879.57 of this amount belonged to the Endowment Fund and was temporarily uninvested.

An organization that is being showered with money in such fashion by those who are deeply interested in bird protection has certainly not been unable to undertake special work to save from extinction some of the more important species that are on the road to that fate. Has anything of the kind been done? An association with \$200,000 or more to spend every year, with thousands of members and backed by hundreds of thousands of nature lovers all over the country, should have no reason to fear the disapproval of, or to come under the influence of any government bureau or any sportsmen's organization however powerful. It should see to it that such agencies and organizations should fear it whenever they are negligent, inefficient or are following or promoting policies that are not justified, and that they receive its cooperation only when and in so far as they are doing effective work.

In accepting such a large sum from the public an organization assumes a deep obligation not to spend it perfunctorily, but to exhibit a live interest and watchfulness in the protection of our native birds, to show ability to meet emergencies when they arise, or what is even more important, to anticipate them so that they do not become emergencies. It should get results and be satisfied with nothing else but successful results, not with excuses for doing nothing or with occasional spurts of activity that are conspicuous but lacking in the determination, enthusiasm and follow-up without which nothing can be accomplished.

The many thousands who are giving their money and support are doing so not because they want a big bird protection society but because they want our birds protected, our disappearing species saved from extinction, and our commoner ones from cruelty, persecution and injury of all kinds. They have a right to expect that opportunities that will never come again shall not be allowed to slip by through inertia, incompetence and procrastination. They should be kept promptly and continually posted on all vital questions concerning bird protection that may be pending and the public should not be allowed to go to sleep or forget these problems until they have been satisfactorily dealt with. How have these duties been fulfilled? How are they being fulfilled now?

If the members of and contributors to such organizations do not insist on their being kept free from all entangling alliances or other connections (whether by interlocking officials or in less evident ways) with government bureaus and sportsmen's organizations, and from all political and commercial influences, they can blame only themselves when they find the organizations useless in the most important emergencies.

As an example of how such entangling alliances work out, the support by bird protection organizations of the Public Shooting Ground Bill that was before Congress constantly for many years may be cited. This bill was also to provide game refuges as well as public shooting grounds, but until the session of 1927-1928 was without any limitations as to how little of the former or how much of the latter, and with nothing to prevent every game refuge being made a public shooting ground at any time after its establishment.

Moreover, forty per cent of the money the bill was to raise, was after certain necessary deductions to be spent in ways loosely described and with no limitations as to how much in each way, "printing" and "personal services" being among the ways named in the bill.

Leaving out of account the questions whether this measure had merits to outweigh the public shooting ground feature and whether an organization has any right to use money given to it for bird protection in promoting public shooting grounds, what shall we say of a bird protection society that publishes in its magazine an article over two pages long promoting and pretending to explain in detail the features of the bill *without a word or a hint that the bill proposed to use a large part of the money raised for public shooting grounds?* (See Bird Lore, March-April, 1925, 145-147.) Is such a course fair and faithful treatment of its members? Does it speak for any confidence in the merits of the bill on the part of the writer of that article?

In Bird Lore for May-June, 1927, pages 214-219, is also another article published by the same organization entitled "Bird Sanctuaries, Public Shooting Grounds and the Utilization of Non-Agricultural Land," which is mainly devoted to a very labored and unconvincing attempt to prove to school children *the importance of public shooting grounds to protect birds!* It is evidently intended to be used by nature study teachers in their class-room work, for it is followed by sixteen questions for the teachers to ask their pupils to test the extent to which the teachings of the article have penetrated. Here are some of them:

"What is meant by public shooting grounds? How can they be established?"

"What is the relationship between public shooting grounds and bird and game refuges? Is there any conflict between the two?"

"What is the order of procedure in establishing a game refuge and a public shooting ground? Explain the importance of each step."

"How are game refuges and public shooting grounds at present financed? What are the prospects for the future?"

Is this a sample of the valuable and effective educational work for bird protection among school children on which this organization prides itself? Is such propaganda an excuse for neglect and inactivity in urgent and immediately needed work to save our disappearing species of birds? Should a society be spending its funds and lobbying for and otherwise promoting a bill whose provisions it dares not let its members understand?

Are the urgent and immediately essential lines of work, the things that must be done now if at all, the opportunities that must be seized upon before they pass never to return, receiving the attention of our bird protectionists, or are they following the path of least resistance and frittering away the greater part of their available resources in lines of work selected not because they are most important, but because in them *no opposition will be encountered and little trouble or effort involved?* How much of the money received is eaten up in expensive junkets for officials, large overhead and administrative expenses, unessential side-issues and an endless chain of contribution soliciting?

EXTERMINATION OF THE BALD EAGLE NOT OPPOSED

Is legislation being watched and the bad measures that constantly come up in the various state legislatures warned against and opposed, as was the

case in the days of William Dutcher's activity? Let us look at a few important recent measures. We need not ask whether any warning or opposition against the Alaskan eagle bounty law was put up by any of our bird protection societies, for not one of them even knew that such a law had been passed until it had been in force for two summers! The bounty law went into effect in April, 1917, and not until the early part of 1919, after 5,100 eagles had been massacred, do we find a mention of it in *Bird Lore* (see *Bird Lore* for Jan.-Feb., 1919, page 72, and May-June, 1919, page 204). Over a year elapsed before the matter was again even alluded to, when another item appears to the effect that the bounties paid had run to 8,356 (*Bird Lore* for July-Aug., 1920, page 253). In this item "certain movements" to get the law repealed were hinted at.

But not another word about these "movements", which evidently amounted to nothing, or about the bounty or about the extermination of the Bald Eagle appeared in the magazine for that year. Nothing about it appeared during the year 1921, either, or in 1922, or in 1923, or 1924, or 1925, or 1926. Meanwhile, individual members had been making repeated efforts to stir the officials of our bird protection organizations to take some action to get the bounty repealed or at least to arouse the public to the rapidly growing danger of extinction of our national emblem. Finally, *after nearly seven years had passed*, and the numbers of eagle bounties paid in Alaska had risen to 41,812 (with an estimated total destruction of at least 70,000) two or three articles on the subject did appear in *Bird Lore* (see issues of Jan.-Feb., 1927, p. 83, Mar.-Apr., 1927, p. 157 and Jan.-Feb., 1928, p. 90). Were they earnest attempts to defend the eagle and condemn the bounty? Did they promise any active campaign to put an end to the slaughter? Far from it. They are largely anti-eagle propaganda. Their general purport and intent is such as to give any uninformed reader seeking information the idea that the eagle is pretty destructive of game and fish and that it is not in danger of extinction, in short to at least partly justify the bounty and to excuse and save the faces of the "bird protectionists" who for ten years have done nothing to put an end to it, and who do not want to be bothered with any such troublesome matter anyway.

NEGLECT TO WATCH LEGISLATION

Another example of neglect to watch legislation was in 1923 when amendments of a few words were quietly slipped into the New York State law by means of which it was made to permit the sale of the "unplucked carcasses" of any birds whatever as long as they are not of "species or subspecies native of this [New York] state." Under this law millions of tinamous have been imported into New York from South America and sold as "partridge" or "quail" and certain species of them nearly exterminated. American travelers are shocked to see bunches of thrushes, nightingales, skylarks and even little warblers hung up for sale as food in the markets of certain European countries. They do not know that those little birds may be legally imported and sold in the markets and restaurants of New

York City, and that since the amendment of the law in 1923 there is no way to stop it. We have yet to learn of any opposition having been put up against this destructive amendment which has resulted in enormous slaughter of foreign game birds, either by any federal officials or by any bird protective society, or of any effort to give the matter the publicity and showing up that might result in its repeal. *It was slipped through with our bird protection organizations and officials sound asleep.*

Sound asleep again, or else totally indifferent, were the officials of the bird protection societies when several years ago California repealed the law protecting the White Pelican on the initiative of the fishermen. Not .001 of one per cent of the fish destroyed in California are eaten by the White Pelican. We may add that the head of one of our chief bird protection organizations flatly refused cooperation with or even a small financial contribution to a certain well-known scientific society of California which sought assistance to have protection restored to this magnificent and rapidly disappearing bird, one of our largest native species. Meanwhile, the organization that refused to aid this important work was finding plenty of money to lobby for the public shooting ground bill that was being promoted by a prominent sportsmen's organization with the backing of the principal gun and ammunition manufacturers of this country.

OTHER INSTANCES OF INEFFICIENCY AND NEGLECT

What efforts other than perhaps a few occasional half-hearted ones of brief duration, lacking in the persistence, determination and follow-up that alone can assure success, have any of our large bird protection organizations made against the unreasonable propaganda of sportsmen's and fishermen's organizations for the extermination of practically every bird that can be blamed with even the most insignificant amount of damage to game or fish, and whose complete extinction could not better the situation for the sportsmen in the slightest?

What help did they give to those who tried to secure a law protecting the beautiful and practically harmless snowy owl which is occasionally driven down to our latitudes from its northern home by unusual conditions of weather or food supply, and is invariably slaughtered to the last bird for no other reason than its beauty and conspicuousness? The next flight that comes down from the north will find no protective law ready for it and the slaughter will be repeated. The time to act on this is now.

How are they carrying out the important task of guarding large breeding colonies of water birds which is one of the most urgent, most directly effective and essential branches of their work?

If we look at a recent annual report of one of them, we find that out of disbursements of almost \$200,000 during the year it spent less than \$6,000, or only about three one-hundredths, on wardens' salaries and expenses. Yet do we not all know how many such colonies are raided by egg hunters and people who kill the birds on the pretext that they eat fish or out of mere wantonness, and that many of them are ruined by neglect to rid them of domestic cats, dogs, rats, etc., that prey on them?

PAPER BIRD RESERVATIONS

Why are our government officials and our rich and sleepy private bird protection organizations satisfied with federal bird reservations that are such on paper only and not in reality? They did nothing effective to warn of and prevent the ruin of the important Lower Klamath Lake reservation that has been drained and totally destroyed as a breeding place for water birds by the government which at the same time was supposed to be protecting it as one of its bird reservations. Why are they so tamely submitting to the plan to do nothing to restore it as far as may still be possible? It is preposterous to claim that a nation of our wealth cannot afford to do this, and it is most important that it should be done, for the places in the western United States where water birds can breed in any numbers are very few and growing fewer all the time.*

The ruin of one of the great bird colonies of the Laysan Islands (outlying islands of the Hawaiian group), one of the most important of our government bird reservations, through official neglect and indifference, which has resulted in the complete extinction of certain of its birds, the Laysan Teal and several land birds not found elsewhere, is another example that the public should not forget.

Practically nothing is being done by our bird protection organizations to acquire actual ownership of such important bird breeding places or localities valuable as bird refuges, which in some cases can still be obtained cheaply, but in a few years can never be obtained at all. This is a kind of neglect that future regrets cannot repair and no future efforts compensate for.

Space will not permit the naming of much other bird protection work that is being totally neglected, though the means to undertake and carry it on exist or could easily be obtained, for never has the public shown itself so interested in such efforts as at the present time, and so ready to support them generously.

INDIFFERENCE OF PROFESSIONAL ORNITHOLOGISTS AND WRITERS

We have in this country a number of prosperous ornithological clubs for the scientific study of birds, and scientific institutions and departments of universities devoting more or less of their attention to this subject, and also many writers of books on birds. What have the men who conduct these activities had to say about the progressing extermination of so many of our native birds and of the persecution of such species as the Bald Eagle and White Pelican in particular? In the case of most of them this question can be answered with the greatest of ease. One word will do it.

Nothing.

*The newly established Tule Lake Bird Reservation is also in the Klamath irrigation project area, and is also subject to exploitation by the Reclamation Service. Some of these days the public may wake up to the fact that the drainage of this sanctuary has been carried out. And meanwhile much of it is to be a public shooting ground, not a refuge.

There are exceptions but they are so few as to serve chiefly to prove the rule. The subject of the extinction of our birds has been all along, and is in most cases still one that these people often ignore completely, or if they allude to it at all it is commonly done in such a half-hearted, timid, apologetic and inconsequential way as to counteract any good effect that the allusion might possibly produce. How can the general public be expected to realize the danger of extinction that threatens many of our birds while the distinguished ornithologists and authors of widely read books on birds to whom the public looks for guidance and warning of impending danger to our native species, remain silent, indifferent or complaisantly satisfied with the situation and with the inefficiency of bird protection organizations of which they are in many cases officials?

The public cannot understand how it is that men who spend the greater part of their lives studying these fascinating creatures do not come to love them and desire their protection, instead of being apparently more indifferent than the average as to whether most of them are wiped off the face of the earth or not. People cannot realize that such astounding indifference exists and they naturally assume in the absence of any warning that all is well. What will future generations think of the scientific men and organizations of today when they look back through the volumes of the scientific ornithological journals of the present time and rarely find a protest or a warning, or even a remark, on the rapid extermination of our bird life?

MUCH MORE REMAINS TO BE TOLD

We have by no means covered the subject of the present breakdown of our bird protection efforts in these few pages. Space prevents mentioning a number of other important matters and pointing out many other instances of neglect, indifference, and incompetence in the way the work has been conducted during the last fifteen or eighteen years, and more especially during the last decade.

The sad part of the situation is that during the latter period alone, money has been contributed by bird lovers and frittered away to an amount which, if intelligently used, would certainly have made safe a number of our birds whose condition has during that time become desperate or entirely hopeless, among these the Bald Eagle, the White Pelican and the Sage Grouse. Let us not lose sight of this fact.

WHAT IS THE REMEDY?

For some of our birds there is evidently no longer a remedy. Most of them might still be made safe. Popular sympathy and interest is growing every day, the sportsmen who wish to protect birds only to kill them themselves will soon be outnumbered (if they are not already) by those whose motive is love for and interest in them, who like to see them around and learn their habits and ways and make friends of them. Money is available now in large amounts, and will be in still larger amounts if evidence of efficient use is produced.

While the sportsmen, their associations and their magazines have been effectively organized on a commercialized basis to increase the destruction of bird life and boom the sale of guns, ammunition and hunting licenses, the great potential force of real bird protectionists has not only never been made efficient, but such slight organization as it has had has largely been taken in charge of by those who look on birds merely as fodder for shot-guns. The failure to combat the outrageous campaign for the extermination of all birds of prey and the scanty and long delayed support of the Norbeck Game Refuge Bill by certain very important bird protection organizations are among the most flagrant instances of the way in which work has been neglected or misdirected. Opportunities that will not return were thrown away, money spent and a farce and a failure made of efforts which, with even an ordinary degree of interest, enthusiasm and common sense, would have scored important successes.

While the people who are providing the funds stand for all this there will be no improvement. As stated in the first page of this pamphlet, the remedy is in their hands.

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Emergency Conservation Committee

Mrs. C. N. Edge, *Secretary*

113 East 72nd Street, New York.

Attention is called to the following publications which will be sent free while the supply lasts on application to the Secretary:

Shotgun Conservation
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Poison for Our Wild Life
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A Crisis in Conservation
Compromised Conservation, Can the Audubon Society Explain?
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The Bald Eagle, Our National Emblem
The Antelope's S. O. S.
Sham Protection for the Alaska Brown Bear
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The Last of the White Pelican
Report of the Special Committee on Problems of Predatory Mammal
Control of the American Society of Mammalogists

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