

PREFACE.

Twenty-two years of personal observation and five years of close study of the literature of the subject of this paper, is perhaps none too long for the object in view, namely the inclusion in a single volume of the sum of our present knowledge of the life history of the species. In its ninety-eight years of history, the Broad-winged Hawk has always been considered rather rare, and for this, more than any other reason, perhaps, it has received a far greater amount of attention in a literary sense than the experience of the average observer would seem to warrant. With chastened spirit, one may trace many of the inaccuracies step by step back to the original statement. Even with the expectation of a vast amount of reiteration, and the possession of the saving sense of humor, the lack of originality of so many writers in reference to this species is all too painfully evident. I therefore point to the above in excuse for my frequent sacrifice of brevity in an honest endeavor to cite all statements in as nearly the exact words of the observer consistent to plain, comprehensive language. This has been a co-operative work, as well as a compilation of all the literature obtainable, and the credit has been given in the text wherever it is due. I am greatly indebted to the following persons for notes, specimens, excerpts, citations, photographs, or other assistance:

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With a few exceptions, the method of treatment requires no further comment than the various sub-heads afford. Ridgway's "Nomenclature of Colors" is the standard for all color descriptions, and for obvious reasons the measurements of skins are given in millimetres following the English inch and hundredth thereof, but for the nest and egg measurements, the latter is employed exclusively because consistency requires uniformity throughout "Nidification," including distances from nest to ground. Knowing that the metric system is practically meaningless to the American oologist, it has been omitted. As far as the literature with its often contradictory reports can be relied upon, supplemented by the manuscript notes in which several state and numerous county records are for the first time recorded, both the past and present status of the species is indicated under the head of "Geographical Distribution," which should be used in conjunction with the "Bibliography." The importance of the latter, if measured by the time and trouble it took to secure the more than seven hundred titles, is not to be told in words. The writer assumes the responsibility for the correctness of all citations not otherwise accredited. Palpably erroneous records are here corrected and with all doubtful ones, are excluded from the body of the work. In conclusion I would beg that my studied omission of all personal titles which would involve tiresome repetition, should not be attributed to a lack of respect and civility.

FRANK L. BURNS.

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