

Wild Turkey

► OF ALL the birds which hunters seek over fields, woods or water, one of the most toothsome is the wild turkey. It is also a very large bird, slow and flopping in flight, an easy and inviting target since the days of the Pilgrims' blunderbusses. The fact that turkeys graced the first Thanksgiving table in Plymouth was not a compliment to the accuracy of those old guns. There were a lot of turkeys in the woods in those plentiful days. To hit one roosting in a tree was more a matter of spraying the whole tree with a full charge of shot.

Hunted out of existence in New England, its numbers pitifully thinned even in the mountains of the South, the turkey today has an understandable hesitancy to take to the air. If surprised while feeding in the stubble of an open field, it would much prefer to make a run for the woods than to fly. Once the thickets are reached, it can disappear against a background of autumn leaves like a phantom, for its dark-brown plumage, highlighted by green, gold and bronze, is a perfect camouflage.

Both the wild turkey and his plumper domesticated cousin are natives of North America. But as it happened, the tame turkey came to the American colonies from Mexico by way of Europe. Cortez and his

Spanish conquerors found turkeys being grown by the Aztecs in the early 1500's and took them back to Europe. A century later, when the Pilgrims came to New England, the domesticated Mexican turkey came with them. The New England wilderness was already full of the wild Eastern variety.

Once common as far north as Canada, today the wild turkey is not found north of Pennsylvania. In the mountains of the Virginias and Carolinas, Tennessee and Kentucky there are larger flocks today than there were 30 years ago, when rigid protection by state laws and active endeavor to increase their numbers began. Colorado, reintroducing the once abundant large Mer-

riam's turkeys, had the first open season on turkeys in 50 years last October.

In its natural habitat, the turkey is one of the shyest birds known. In the summer the mating calls give their presence away in the mountains, as the big toms gather their wives (normal complement for a strong male is at least three). This marital unbalance seems to make family life somewhat strained among the turkeys. When the hens go off to lay their eggs, they take great pains to hide the nest from the gobler. He will break the eggs or kill the young birds if he comes upon a nest.

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Books of the Week

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THE ART OF SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATION—W. I. B. Beveridge—*Norton*, 171 p., illus., \$3.00. The author turns to look at research itself and examines basic principles and mental techniques that are common to most types of investigation.

BASIC ELECTRICAL MEASUREMENTS—Melville B. Stout—*Prentice-Hall*, 504 p., illus., \$7.75. An undergraduate text presenting the more important methods for obtaining measurements.

CHEMICAL THERMODYNAMICS: Basic Theory and Methods—Irving M. Klotz—*Prentice-Hall*, 369 p., illus., \$6.00. A textbook designed primarily for chemists.

A COLLECTION OF BIRDS FROM BOLIVAR, COLOMBIA, Part VII: Colombian Zoological Survey—Rodolphe Meyer de Schauensee—*Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia*, 28 p., paper, 85 cents. The author records 125 species which he found in Bolivar during 1949.

COMPARATIVE ANIMAL PHYSIOLOGY—C. Ladd Prosser, Ed.—*Saunders*, 888 p., illus., \$12.50. An advanced college text.

EFFECTS OF DIVERTING SEDIMENT-LADEN RUN-OFF FROM ARROYOS TO RANGE AND CROP LANDS—D. S. Hubbell and J. L. Gardner—*Gov't. Printing Office*, U. S. Dept. of Ag. Tech. Bull. No. 1012, 83 p., illus., paper, 25 cents.

ELECTROMAGNETIC WAVES AND RADIATING SYSTEMS—Edward C. Jordan—*Prentice-Hall*, 710 p., illus., \$10.50. An advanced college text.

ENCYCLOPEDIA ON CATHODE-RAY OSCILLOSCOPES AND THEIR USES—John F. Rider and Seymour D. Uslan—*Rider*, 982 p., illus., \$9.00. A description of many types of cathode-ray oscilloscopes and synchrosopes manufactured between 1940 and 1950.

EVOLUTIONARY THOUGHT IN AMERICA—Stow Persons, Ed.—*Yale University Press*, 462 p., illus., \$5.00. Essays on nineteenth-century theories of organic evolution in American economics, sociology, literature, architecture and many other fields.

FERTILITY DATA IN POPULATION CENSUSES—Department of Social Affairs—*United Nations* (U. S. Distributor: Columbia University Press), Population study no. 6, 31 p., paper, 30 cents.

THE GOOD RAIN—Alice E. Goudey—*Aladdin Books*, 30 p., illus., \$1.75. A child's book telling what the lack of rain might mean to the city and country child. Illustrated by Nora S. Unwin.

GREAT AMERICAN NATURE WRITING—Joseph Wood Krutch, Selector and Commentator—*Sloane*, 444 p., illus., \$5.00. An anthology. Among the works presented are those of Thoreau, Devoe, Austin, Beebe and Wheeler.

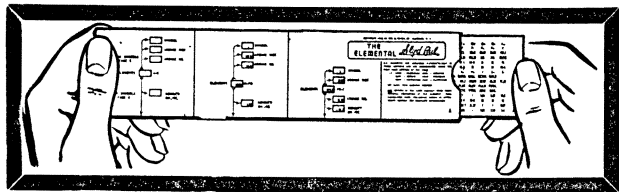
A LABORATORY MANUAL OF ELEMENTARY CHEMICAL ANALYSIS—Thomas H. Whitehead—*Ginn*, 64 p., illus., paper, \$1.25. A well-arranged laboratory manual for qualitative analysis.

LATIN TREATISES ON COMETS BETWEEN 1238 and 1368 A.D.—Lynn Thorndike, Ed.—*University of Chicago*, 274 p., \$5.00. The Latin text of a number of treatises and passages on comets is presented. The editor has written a brief introduction to each.

LIFELONG BOYHOOD: Recollections of a Naturalist Afield—Loye Miller—*University of California Press*, 226 p., \$2.75. A collection of the author's memoirs which trace the development of a naturalist.

MEDICAL CARE FOR SEAMEN: The Origin of Public Medical Service in the United States—Robert Straus—*Yale University Press*, 165 p., \$3.75. The author traces the evolution of public medical services for American seamen

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