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NEWS

and Notes

During the dry seasons of 1946 and 1947 Alexander Wetmore, secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, has made brief expeditions into eastern Darién to study the bird life of that area. The region lies on the Pacific side of the Republic of Panamá, near the frontier of Colombia. It is thus on the threshold of the Chocó region of north-western Colombia. The distance involved and the prevalence of malaria have until recently made this region relatively inaccessible.

In 1946, with Watson M. Perrygo, of the National Museum, as assistant, Dr. Wetmore concentrated on the coast at the mouth of the Río Jaqué, making collections, principally of birds, and simultaneously carrying on studies of the migration of North American birds to South America in our winter season. Here also he established friendly relations with the Chocó Indians, who came down river from the interior. This year, on invitation from these Indians, Dr. Wetmore and Mr. Perrygo returned to Jaqué, traveling into the mountains in dugout canoes poled by the natives through the rapids to the head of navigation. Hunting trails were cut in the forests surrounding the camp, and other areas were reached by Indian trails. The collections of birds made on this expedition, now in the National Museum, fill in gaps in distribution and add to knowledge of the life of the region.