

some other part. Invariably, however, all would join in.

This habit was first observed by me several years ago, just how long I do not remember. It is associated with my earliest recollections of the insect. I have made more or less careful observation of it and taken notes several times, the first time in 1912. I do not think that I ever saw a colony that did not have the habit and I have had them in the laboratory every summer for several years. Observations of the habit may be made on colonies confined in the breeding cage or on those in the natural conditions. There seems to be no difference.

There is no doubt in my mind that this habit is an excellent example of synchronous rhythmic motion, not occasional or accidental, but habitual with the species. It may be well added to Mr. Craig's single, more or less doubtful, example, that of the chirping of crickets.

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THE POPULAR NAMES OF NORTH AMERICAN PLANTS

AN article under this title in *SCIENCE* for February 2, by J. Adams, opens a question which has interested the present writer partly for the same reasons as there given, and he has passed through various stages of mental attitude toward it.

A notable fact is that common names when once established are apparently more stable than the scientific names. The names of birds furnish a good example of this, very few common names having been changed in the last fifteen years while a fourth or more of the scientific names have been changed, and some of them two or three times. However, the number of species of seed plants is about ten times as great as that of birds.

This very stability indicates difficulty in establishing common names where none exist. Names are a result of necessary "handles," and the greater part of those species which have not received them are not regarded frequently enough to establish names. The essential qualities of a name would seem to be sig-

nificance and simplicity. The use of qualifying adjectives should be avoided as far as possible. The writer is not certain that a species must bear the same name in different regions, or that different species may not have the same one inasmuch as a name which is appropriate in one place may not be in another, and similar species often occupy similar places in different regions. The writer places much value on local lists, keys, etc., including a single state or natural area. This restricts the number of species involved and simplifies identification.

The surest way to acquaint the general public with the names of plants is through illustrations. Is it not possible to have a cooperative system by which different states would be responsible for certain portions and thus distribute the cost of production as widely as possible? This would eliminate the duplication now current from the publication of similar material in different places and permit the use of first-class illustrations of uniform quality, as well as help to unify the names.

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FAUNAL CONDITIONS IN SOUTH GEORGIA ISLANDS

DURING a recent visit to the islands of South Georgia (latitude 54° south) a very curious faunal condition was noted, and as this is, perhaps, of biological interest, it may be well to state briefly the facts of the case.

South Georgia lies in the sub-Antarctic region a few hundred miles to the east of Cape Horn. The season is open for about three months, but quite rigorous the remainder of the year. The principal vegetation is tussock grass, and this at one time supported many rabbits and perhaps a few other species of mammals. A few decades ago, the whaling industry was started with South Georgia as a base of operations. To-day there are nine whaling stations on the large island, and in a good season of three or four months, several thousand whales are handled. The carcasses are allowed to drift along the beach, as soon as the outer coating of blubber has been removed.