

THE BIRDWATCHER'S BOOK OF LISTS by Dr. Lester L. Short. 1987. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. *EASTERN REGION*. 128 pages; *WESTERN REGION*. 128 pages; spiral bound \$7.95 each.

These two little volumes are profoundly awful. They each contain twenty-three birding lists, with a space beside each listed bird for notations. The lists are very strange, indeed, and include "Female Waterfowl," "Year List of Birds in Flight," and "The 24-hour Spring Field Birdwatch," which, of course, lists only birds found in fields. The list titled "Permanent Residents" in the eastern version comprises sixty-three species, including such permanent residents as Brown Pelican, Spruce Grouse, Red-cockaded Woodpecker, and Gray Jay. (Where do these birds all live together?) The illustrations, which the author states were chosen "to portray only the more common, widespread, and conspicuous birds of the region covered" include Western Tanager, Arctic Loon, American Flamingo, Steller's Jay, and California Quail (I think) for the eastern region. On top of that, they are terrible. The publisher calls these books "indispensable"; I call them the worst bird books of 1987.

THE COMPLETE BIRDER, A GUIDE TO BETTER BIRDING by Jack Connor. 1988. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. xiii + 285 pages, illustrated; paperback \$8.70, hardcover \$18.45.

Jack Connor has written an extremely readable and useful addition to the literature of birding. Further, his work amuses as it instructs, a quality missing from the terse writing of too many field identification experts. In twelve chapters, the author covers all of the favorite subjects of today's birders: warblers, hawks, shorebirds, terns, and gulls (What! No sparrows?), providing advice on how to take your birding ability up a notch or two. Margaret LaFarge's illustrations are excellent. If you are not yet a pro, this book is for you.

AN IDENTIFICATION GUIDE TO THE DUCKS, GEESE AND SWANS OF THE WORLD by Steve Madge and Hilary Burn. 1988. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 298 pages, 47 color plates, 155 maps; \$35.

This newest addition to Houghton Mifflin Company's outstanding series of worldwide bird guides (it follows *SEABIRDS* and *SHOREBIRDS*) is certain to be the standard in the field for years to come. The well-written and researched species accounts include sections on field identification, voice, description, bare parts, measurements, geographical variation, habits, habitat, distribution, population, and references. The color plates, depicting over 700 plumages of the world's 155 species of waterfowl, are beautifully painted and designed. My only criticism concerns the plate captions, which, while quite excellent, are often not directly across from the corresponding illustration. This is a definite distraction

and should be corrected in subsequent editions. Despite this minor problem, the book is excellent and should be in every serious birdwatcher's library.

WHERE TO WATCH BIRDS IN BRITAIN AND EUROPE by John Gooders.

1988. Lincolnwood: Passport Books. xv + 254 pages, maps, text, illustrations; paperback \$17.95.

The new edition of this well-known, bird-finding guide is expanded to include Israel, Tunisia, Cyprus, Morocco, and Asiatic Turkey. Although the author admits bias in his coverage of countries (Spain, Finland, and Greece have greater coverage than many others), all of the best-known and important birdwatching areas are adequately presented, with seasonal bird lists and details on routes and access. There is a complete locality index (but not one for birds!). All in all, a good production.

The forewords of two of the books reviewed above were written by Roger Tory Peterson. So, Happy Birthday to you, Roger (August 28)! I'll bet you've spent more time writing forewords than Larry Bird has spent covering them. *MANY HAPPY RETURNS!*

BRIAN E. CASSIE has in the past irregularly contributed this column to *Bird Observer* by mail from Millis. After a long hiatus Brian emerged from his new residence in Foxboro to post the above words to us. The mail service from Foxboro (fortunately for our publishing deadlines) is first-class.

FALL MIGRATION: A SOUTHERN SOJOURN

September 30 to October 10, 1988

Birder of intermediate skill would like to travel from New England to Gulf Coast with stops at Cape May, Brigantine, Assateague, Chincoteague, and other hot spots; needs hale and hearty companion to share modest expenses, driving, and provide an extra pair of eyes. If interested, please write

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