

THE BIRDS OF JAVA AND BALI by Derek Holmes. 1989. Singapore: Oxford University Press. 133 pages; 24 color plates, color frontispiece, 6 black-and-white drawings; \$19.95.

The title of this book is a bit misleading; perhaps it should have been titled *Some of the Birds of Java and Bali*. It is, indeed, little more than an introduction to the approximately 480 avian species in the region. Holmes's intent, it should be noted, was to produce a guide to "most of the birds that can be found readily in the various habitats of Java and Bali." Presumably, this has been accomplished. There are 112 birds illustrated and 120 others referenced in the text. The plates are only fair but do include figures of 34 birds not illustrated in Ben King's southeast Asia guide. Although it is not a serious ornithological work, this guide will nevertheless be of much use to visiting birdwatchers.

SAVE THE BIRDS by Rudolf L. Schreiber (Initiator and Creative Director), Anthony W. Diamond (Principal Author), Roger Tory Peterson and Walter Cronkite (Authors). 1989. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 384 pages; 600 color illustrations and photos; \$39.95.

"With the publication of this book, the International Council for Bird Preservation (ICBP) is launching a major worldwide campaign: SAVE THE BIRDS WORLDWIDE CAMPAIGN. *Save the Birds* was conceived by PRO NATURE, West Germany, and was implemented in close association with the ICBP, England. From every book sold, a contribution will be made to ICBP's SAVE THE BIRDS campaign account." Biologists say that we have now entered the last decade in which we can make much of a difference in determining the fate of our environment and, of course, the fate of all plants and animals. At a recent conference on migrant birds in the Neotropics, I learned that radar studies show the number of birds migrating across the Gulf of Mexico is now half what it was twenty years ago. That is fifty percent in twenty years! And that is one statistic from one small corner of the globe. Birds are getting it everywhere. *Save the Birds* is a call to action—an extremely well written, lavishly presented call to action. Individual species and enormous biological communities are in danger of extinction. Before you write the next check to a tour agency for a tropical or Arctic bird adventure, contact the ICBP to find out what you can do to help save some of the birds you may be rushing off to see before they disappear forever.

A GUIDE TO THE BIRDS OF PANAMA with Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and Honduras by Robert S. Ridgely and John A. Gwynne, Jr., second edition. 1989. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 632 pages; 48 color plates, black-and-white illustrations; \$49.50.

There is so much new in the second edition of this guide, now covering over a thousand species, that one hardly knows where to begin. First, with the inclusion of John Gwynne, there are now two authors. Second, as the title implies, species found in Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and Honduras are included, in a separate fifty-six-page section. Each of these species is presented in a one-paragraph synopsis. The main portion of the book has much lengthier species accounts. Additionally, there is a greatly expanded chapter on bird finding in Panama and much useful introductory material, including a chapter titled "Recent Developments in Panama Ornithology and Conservation." Although the publisher promises only nineteen new color plates (of forty-eight total), I count twenty-three, including a few completely reworked from the original edition. Noteworthy in the illustrations is the inclusion of many more wintering migrants, including warblers, thrushes, shorebirds, and ducks. Nomenclature generally follows the 1983 *A.O.U. Check-list* with a few exceptions. Broad-billed Sapayoa and Gray-headed Piprites are new names given species long considered manakins; Brownish Twistwing is the authors' new (and I think unfortunate) name for Brownish Flycatcher. There are separate Latin and English indexes. Highly recommended.

A GUIDE TO THE BIRDS OF COSTA RICA by F. Gary Stiles and Alexander F. Skutch. 1989. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. 612 pages; 52 color plates by Dana Gardner; \$65 cloth, \$35 paperbound.

Until now birdwatchers traveling to Costa Rica have had to take along the Panama and Mexico field guides, as well as a comprehensive North American guide, to ensure coverage of most of the Costa Rican species. Thankfully, this situation has been remedied with the publication of this remarkably well-done field guide in which all of the country's birds, both resident and transient, are discussed and illustrated. In sixty-one pages of introduction, the authors focus on geography, development of the avifauna, conservation, and climate. There is an excellent, concise illustrated glossary of anatomical terms, with 118 terms illustrated in thirty-two figures. Accounts of approximately 830 species make up the bulk of the text. English, Latin, and Spanish names are listed for each species, and the species treatments include description, habits, voice, nest, status in Costa Rica, and range. The authors have spent over seventy years between them studying Costa Rican birds, and the species accounts, although necessarily short, reflect their tremendous knowledge of the avifauna.

The artist, Dana Gardner, a gifted illustrator, is at his best painting the gaudy assemblage of Costa Rican tanagers, finches, orioles, cotingas, manakins, etc. His shorebirds and seabirds, on the other hand, are quite unremarkable. Birders will appreciate the variety of plumages and the number of birds depicted in flight in the five plates of diurnal birds of prey. My only real gripe with the plates is that eleven of them have birds that are cut off at the edge of the picture,

leaving off a foot or end of a tail.

For those of you keeping a Central American bird list, here are some new names incorporated by Skutch and Stiles (previous common name in parentheses): Mistletoe Tyrannulet (Paltry Tyrannulet), Zeledon's Tyrannulet (White-fronted Tyrannulet), Beryl-crowned Hummingbird (Charming Hummingbird), Red-footed Plumeleteer (Bronze-tailed Plumeleteer), Zeledonia (Wrenthrush), and Whistling Wren (Southern Nightingale Wren). Also, Gray-tailed Mountain-Gem (a hummingbird) is given species status, while the Mangrove Black-Hawk is not recognized as such.

The index is a hopeless jumble of languages and typefaces, an unfortunate end to an otherwise historic work. Highly recommended.

A GUIDE TO THE BIRDS OF PUERTO RICO AND THE VIRGIN ISLANDS by

Herbert A. Raffaele, revised edition. Princeton: Princeton University Press. x + 342 pages; 42 plates, 24 in color; \$15.95 paperbound.

This revised edition reflects changes in the islands' birdlife in the last eight years, including accounts of eleven new species (total 284). I note eight changes in common names, mostly involving introduced species but notably including Antillean Euphonia, changed from Blue-hooded Euphonia (with no explanation). There are two additional color plates. The first edition of this guide was available for a short time only (and not at all in Puerto Rico!). Let us hope that the new publisher will keep this edition in print for some time to come.

BRIAN E. CASSIE, naturalist, lepidopterist, birdwatcher, and bird tour leader, lives in Foxboro, where he operates a mail-order book business. His lucid and direct comments on books are always welcome in these pages.