

**Birder's life list & diary.**—Ron and Betty Dietert, revised and edited by S. C. Sibley. 1986. Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, Ithaca, New York. 213 pp. Soft covers, spiral bound; \$6.95.—This book, first published by the Dieterts in 1959, provides birders a means to record the field notes of their first sightings of North American and Hawaiian birds. Steven C. Sibley revised and updated this edition to reflect changes in names and classifications as introduced in the 6th edition of the "Check-list of North American birds" (American Ornithologists' Union 1983, Lawrence, Kansas: Allen Press) and the "Thirty-fifth supplement to the A.O.U. check-list of North American birds" (1985, *Auk* 102: 680-686).

The Species Listing section presents in taxonomic order 690 species of birds regularly occurring in North America north of Mexico plus 22 birds, formerly given full species status, now considered subspecies, color forms or color morphs. Space is available for recording date, location and field notes for each entry. English and scientific names are given for each species. Species are grouped by order. Blank spaces are provided for adding accidentals at the end of most orders and, in the case of some of the larger orders (e.g., Charadriiformes and Passeriformes), within the order.

Appendix A lists 72 species of birds which occur regularly in the Hawaiian Islands. Again, space is provided for recording information on sightings. Appendix B lists 156 species that the A.O.U. recognizes as occurring accidentally in North America. Five small check spaces are provided after each entry for recording a sighting or indicating a page reference number. Appendix C is a blank list of 828 spaces for recording sightings in the order in which they are made. Finally, the Index is an alphabetical list of birds by English names with references to page numbers in the Species Listing section or in Appendices A and B. Twelve check spaces are provided for each species.

The "Birder's life list & diary" is easy to use and a versatile aid for organizing first sightings. These may be recorded in taxonomic, alphabetic or temporal order. Ample space is available for entering information in the first two sections. A Quick Finder Guide is provided to facilitate location of orders or certain groupings within orders in the Species Listing section.

The soft cover of the diary may not prove durable for field use. Within the Species Listing section the orders could well have been subdivided into families and, where appropriate, into subfamilies, particularly within the Passeriformes. Such further division would indicate relationships within orders and within mega-families such as the Emberizidae. Additional blank spaces for recording sightings of accidental species would be useful at the end of the family or subfamily divisions; here they would be more meaningful and logical. It would have been useful if Appendix A, the listing of Hawaiian birds, had been subdivided into orders, families and subfamilies. There might have been some justification for including the accidentals listed in Appendix C within the main body of the diary. This would have enabled the user to see the relationship of accidentals to regularly occurring North American birds and would have facilitated the recording of data for these species.

Intermediate and advanced birders, who have already recorded data on first sightings in personal notebooks or other record forms, might find transcribing this information into the the format of the diary laborious. Beginning and early intermediate birders, however, should find this book very worthwhile. The diary provides a format for recording and organizing information on species; it can be maintained as skills improve and life lists lengthen. As beginners become advanced birders, they will have a continuing record of memories and increasing proficiency.—**Mary Catherine Wheeler**, 11700 SW 104 Avenue, Miami, Florida 33176.