

REVIEWS

Wilson, Ron, and Pat Lee. *The Marshland World*. Blandford Press. Poole, Dorset, England. viii + 152 pp. \$17.95.

Marshes and swamps are often seen, by most people, as foreign, drab, and uninviting places. For this reason few people venture out into them to see the wide variety of plants and animals which inhabit these wet worlds. Ron Wilson and Pat Lee have done a fine job of introducing the colorful and interesting plants and animals of European marsh habitats. Although this book is concerned largely with British marshes, many parallels may be drawn with similar areas around the world.

Following a brief introduction, the book is divided into three parts: man's historical and continued use of marsh plants and animals, the common marshland vegetation, and the common marshland animals. In each section, mention is made of man's past and present influence. Animals considered include invertebrates, fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals. The coverage of birds includes a brief account of the feeding and nesting activities of each species. Consideration is given to those birds inhabiting the marsh, as well as those that just visit the marsh, but live in peripheral habitats.

The book is filled with beautiful color photographs of the common species of organisms considered. Although the accounts of some organisms are brief and occasional errors occur, the book provides a good overview of marshland life for the casual reader. The reader may, however, be confronted with unfamiliar European terms, particularly in the first part. Overall, "The Marshland World" provides a good introduction to a commonly overlooked habitat.--Mark LaSalle.

Sutton, George M. 1980. *Bird Student*. University of Texas Press, Austin. 216 pp, 9 color plates, several black-and-white plates. \$15.95.

I first met George Sutton several years ago when I was a graduate student studying geographic variation in woodpeckers. I had the good fortune to visit "Doc" and to be "taken in" by

him for a week while I worked with specimens in the collection at the University of Oklahoma. Each evening we sat in his living room and "talked birds." I, for the most part, listened.

The evenings he shared with me were some of the most exciting of my life. The impressions he left are indelible. As I began reading "Bird Student" I could hear "Doc" speaking the words to me. He wrote as he spoke. And this conversational style makes the reader feel as if he is right there at the scene of the action.

"Bird Student" is an autobiography of George Sutton's boyhood days in Oregon, Illinois, Texas, West Virginia, New York, and Pittsburgh. It also includes accounts of his first expeditions to Labrador, Hudson Bay, and the far north, ending with an epilogue describing his days as a graduate student at Cornell University.

The color plates include a profile of a Snowy Owl, a Pied-billed Grebe, two King Eiders, a Greater Scaup, an Oldsquaw, a Labrador landscape, some Arctic char, and a walrus. All are exquisite and well-reproduced.

No bird lover, no armchair adventurer, no aspiring field ornithologist should miss the excitement and inspiration to be found in "Bird Student."--J.A.J.