

## BOOK REVIEWS

**Handbook of Birds of the World. Vol. 3: Hoatzin to Auks.**—Josep del Hoyo, Andrew Elliott, and Jordi Sargatal, eds. 1996. Lynx Editions, Barcelona, Spain. 821 pp., 60 color plates, 384 color photographs, numerous maps. ISBN 84-87334-20-2. \$175.00 (cloth).

This impressive tome continues the standard of excellence set by the two earlier volumes of the series, which have received much-deserved acclaim from a host of reviewers. At 800+ pages and 8 pounds, its size is daunting (you may need help getting it off your lap), and its title mocks the concept of “Handbook.” Even “Encyclopedia” doesn’t quite fit because several chapters are virtual books by themselves.

The format in Volume 3 follows earlier numbers and presents for each family a detailed and authoritative essay on virtually all aspects of natural history, supplemented by a concise but detailed account for every species. The latter includes standard material on taxonomy, characteristics, distribution (with maps), and general biology, and pulls together current information on status and population size that will be of wide interest. Salient plumages of all species and races are illustrated in a series of 60 color plates.

Family accounts range in length from 3 pages for the poorly-known Pedionomidae to 43 pages for the Scolopacidae. Most were written by active scientists whose own studies have contributed much to current knowledge. Those include G. Archibald (cranes), J. Burger and M. Gochfeld (gulls and terns), P. Hockey (oystercatchers), R. Furness (skuas), and G. Maclean (glareolids), to name just a few. Accounts for families that seem to lack active students have been produced with the same level of excellence, which attests to the editors’ judgment in seeking collaborators. Given their universal high quality, it is ungracious to single out any chapters. However, I found T. Piersma’s book length treatment of the Scolopacidae especially insightful, and D. Nettleship’s discussion of the human interactions with alcid quite comprehensive. I hope N. J. Collar’s much-needed overview of the Otididae will stimulate further study before extinctions of some species make that impossible.

Chapters are written as long essays, with selected references clumped at the end. Thus, one can read for content and not be distracted by superfluous references or statistical tests (I found none). But that has its price when one encounters questionable statements or ideas stimulating further work. For example, I read of information about the Pluvianellidae that extended my own 1975 findings, but pinpointing its source, like that bird’s foraging behavior, will take some digging. In another case, information in the essay (Long-billed Dowitchers from Siberia migrate to South America, p. 479) is not consonant either with the species account (p. 498) or the regional literature, which considers records south of Panama as questionable. The omission

of a set of selected references for some poorly-known families (e.g., mesites, button-quail) is frustrating and only partially compensated by the amazing 80 page and 10,000+ entry bibliography that makes up 10% of the entire volume.

A highlight of the book is the abundant and stunning color photographs, which emphasize behavior and, when possible, move well beyond traditional shots of birds at the nest. Those represent the best of current photographic skill, but they also illustrate that photography is a big business. Pictures of gulls or skuas taking seabird eggs or young, no matter how biologically accurate, are almost always generated by deliberate human provocation. Short-billed Dowitcher nests are concealed in thick sedge clumps. That fact could not be determined from the photograph on p. 474, which shows everything but the weedwacker used to remove all cover from the nest, which would lead to its desertion. If this is bothersome, remember that it is our demand for bigger, better, and more spectacular shots that supports the paparazzi of natural history. Such photos make one wonder why the permitting process is limited to legitimate scientists.

No book is free of errors or statements of questionable interpretation, but in this case they are few. In matters of taxonomy, however, the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature should not be transgressed. I take exception to the editors’ use “for reason of simplification” of “Chionidae” and “Calidrinae” to replace “Chionidae” and “Calidridinae” (p. 20). Those spellings were previously employed by Bock (*Bull. Am. Mus. Nat. Hist.* 222:138, 1994; see review by Olson, *Auk* 112:539-546, 1995). But the Code [art. 29 (b) (i)] does not allow for simplification. Moreover, the issue is not the suffix but the stem of the word for the name of the family group. For example, “the genitive singular of the feminine Greek word *skalidris* (*calidris* L.) is *skalidridos*. Thus, the stem of the word is *skalidrid-*, and the name of the subfamily should become Calidridinae” (Jehl, *Condor* 70:206, 1966). For further comments on stability of family-group names see Olson (*Bull. Zool. Nomen.* 47:296, 1990).

Do not let minor flaws prevent you from studying this book, or purchasing it if it is within your budget. At a minimum, the series should be in any ornithological library worth the designation. Its scope is so comprehensive and its detail so acute that it will become the logical starting place for synoptic information on the family level and required reading for any “birds of the world” course. I do not know any ornithologist who will not encounter much new information. Did you know, for example, that trumpeters have a special call that alerts others to the presence of a snake, and that they wipe millipedes on their feathers, apparently to use the included hydrogen cyanide to ward off predators or kill parasites?

A common concern with massive compendia, which obviously take a long time to produce, is that they may be out of date before they are published. I merely note that I found two instances in which information in the *Handbook* antedated its appearance in refereed journals.

Churchill once reviewed a book "which by its very length defended itself against the threat of being read." That description fits most encyclopedias, but not this one. Despite its size and cost, its wealth of information combined with beauty of presentation insures that this is a reference book that will be enjoyed *and* read for a long time.—J. R. JEHL JR., Hubbs-Sea World Research Institute, 2595 Ingraham St., San Diego, CA 92109, e-mail: jjehl@hubbs.sdsu.edu

**Raptors: The Birds of Prey.**—Scott Weidensaul. 1996. Lyons and Burford, New York. ix + 382 pp., 5 figures, 121 tables, 25 maps, 153 color photos, 9 black-and-white photos. ISBN 1-55821-275-2. \$40.00 (USA), \$58.00 (Canada) (cloth).

**Raptors: North American Birds of Prey.**—Noel F. R. Snyder and Helen A. Snyder. 1997. Voyageur Press, Stillwater, Minnesota. ix + 224 pp., 36 maps, 182 color photos, 3 black-and-white photos. ISBN 0-89658-349-X. \$24.95 (paper).

As with many books bearing the title *Raptors*, the two books reviewed here treat only diurnal raptors comprising the order Falconiformes, omitting owls. Each represents an attempt to excite, as well as inform, the reader about that charismatic group of birds, and each should succeed at both goals. The authors differ in educational background and profession, but clearly share an unbridled fascination and reverence for nature, in general, and birds of prey in particular.

Scott Weidensaul is a natural history columnist for the *Philadelphia Enquirer*, and the author of more than two dozen books on natural history. In his Introduction, the author admits to being obsessed with birds of prey for nearly 25 years, beginning when he was 12. His magnificent obsession for raptors shines through every page of this handsome book. The text is concise, yet lively, and tables are attractively presented and easily understood. The overall quality of the color photographs is excellent, and they are strategically scattered to complement the text and maintain the reader's interest. Other than the recurrent misspelling of Steller's (misspelled Stellar's) Sea-eagle (*Haliaeetus pelagicus*), I found only two, minor typographical errors (p. 42, "airs" instead of "air;" p. 339 "unduo" instead of "undue"). The subtitle appearing on the dust cover, *An Almanac of Hawks, Eagles, and Falcons of the World* is somewhat misleading; coverage throughout is greatly skewed toward North American and European species.

*Raptors: The Birds of Prey* is presented in four sections. The first section, "Hunters on the Wind," covers evolution, systematics, anatomy and physiology, senses, and flight. Included here is a good general discussion of classification systems and an up-to-date comparison of "traditional" and biochemical classification schemes. In his presentation of polychromatism, Weidensaul regrettably persists in using the term "phase"

in reference to color morphs, despite his admission that phase is a deceiving term.

The heart of the book is the large, well-documented section on "Ecology and Natural History," which addresses behavior, reproductive biology, foraging methods and diet, migration, and life span. Migration receives particularly broad coverage while relatively little attention is devoted to reproductive success and population regulation. Although a clear distinction is made between breeding territory (area actively defended) and home range (all area used), some unfortunate ambiguity is introduced when the term "hunting territory" is used to describe an area that may or may not be defended. There are a few notable inconsistencies and omissions in this section. For example, the text indicates that Swainson's Hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*) "feeds heavily on insects" in nesting areas, while one table lists small mammals as the primary prey, and another table correctly shows that these birds switch from a diet of small and medium-size mammals in the breeding season to insects during the nonbreeding season. In a discussion of raptors that use ground pursuit as a foraging technique, no mention is made of Ferruginous Hawks (*Buteo regalis*) hunting on foot in prairie dog (*Cynomys* sp.) colonies. This is an especially common technique in some areas during the nonbreeding season. Similarly, the table listing typical items added to the nest fails to include bison (*Bison bison*) bones, pronghorn (*Antilocapra americana*) bones, or the ubiquitous bovine dung found in Ferruginous Hawk nests.

The section devoted to "Conservation" features chapters on legal protection, management techniques, conservation challenges, and conservation case histories. It provides a quick reference to threatened and endangered raptors of the world and a good overview of conservation issues and efforts in the latter half of this century. "Raptors in the Human World" addresses human use of raptors as symbols, falconry, hawk-watching, economics, and finally, methods of helping raptors. The latter includes information about such widely varied subjects as how to construct a nest box for American Kestrels (*Falco sparverius*), a nest platform for Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*), and what to do with a banded or injured raptor. Logistical and legal information about handling injured raptors is not widely available, and guidance included in this volume should prove helpful to potential rescuers. Unfortunately, there is no clear direction or encouragement provided for ensuring that a dead raptor legally reaches a museum or other appropriate specimen repository. Even some wildlife managers are unaware of the importance of well-documented, salvaged specimens to museum collections, and Weidensaul missed an opportunity to disseminate this message to a broad audience.

Scott Weidensaul has put together an extremely attractive, polished introduction to the world's diurnal raptors. The minor problems noted above do not significantly detract from this delightful book. It will serve as a valuable, current reference for raptor enthusiasts and novices, alike, and provide hours of entertaining reading for anyone interested in natural history

and the enduring relationship between humans and wildlife.

Similarly, *Raptors: North American Birds of Prey* treats the reader to an entertaining and informative narrative, richly illustrated with high-quality color photographs. This book was previously published by Voyageur Press in 1991, as *Birds of Prey: Natural History and Conservation of North American Raptors*, and received broad review soon thereafter. The title and cover photography differ between the two volumes, but the text and photographs inside are precisely the same. The new, soft cover version is less expensive than the original, and is a bargain. What is especially noteworthy about this book is the insight provided from the authors' personal field experience. Noel and Helen Snyder are well-known field biologists who have amassed an enviable storehouse of field adventures. Although some of the details presented are outdated in 1997 (e.g., "... the first reintroductions of California Condors into the Sespe Sanctuary may occur as soon as late 1991."), the collective observations and insights are timeless.

*Raptors: North American Birds of Prey* summarizes the natural history (peppered liberally with the authors' direct observations) of the 34 falconiform species that "... have bred regularly in recent times within the confines of continental North America". Rather than attempting to provide exhaustive accounts of the species included, the Snyders wrote this book to "... awaken curiosity..." about raptors and to "... encourage a general interest in raptor conservation". It is intended for the layperson and is easily accessible to the general reader. There are no tables or figures, and little attention is devoted to technical detail. Instead, the reader is treated to intimate portraits of the daily lives and challenges faced by the species considered. I highly recommend it as an introduction to North American raptors.

Together, these two books serve as testimony to the enduring spell that raptors cast over amateurs and professional ornithologists alike. Both books serve to enhance understanding without diminishing wonder.—CHARLES R. PRESTON, Department of Zoology, Denver Museum of Natural History, 2001 Colorado Blvd., Denver, CO 80205, e-mail: cpreston@dmnh.org

**The Oystercatcher: From Individuals to Populations.**—John D. Goss-Custard, ed. 1996. Oxford University Press, New York. x + 442 pp., 19 black-and-white photographs, 156 text figures, 24 tables. ISBN 0-19-854647-5. \$115.00 (cloth).

The Eurasian Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*, known Eurocentrically as "The" Oystercatcher) is one of the most-studied shorebirds in the world. One might think that a bird whose sexes are indistinguishable in the field, that lives long, breeds late, migrates to numerous countries, has precocial young, and exhibits multiple feeding specializations and a complex social structure, would be difficult to study in depth. However, oystercatchers possess researcher-friendly qualities as well. They are conspicuous, live in open environments, are not overly shy of humans, prey on rather large food items, and feed their precocial chicks so that they can be followed relatively easily. As a

result, behavioral ecologists have quantified their reproductive success and foraging activities with a precision seldom achieved in other species.

This new volume in the Oxford Ornithology Series testifies to the popularity of oystercatchers and the spirit of cooperation among those who study them. Western Europeans have a long history of coordinated projects in studying their subspecies, *H. o. ostralegus*. The need to synthesize decades of research was recognized at an International Waterfowl and Wetlands Research Bureau/Wader Study Group conference in 1989, and this book was organized at a subsequent conference in 1991. The result is one of the most thorough and well-integrated multi-authored volumes I have seen. This review of the behavior and population ecology of the Eurasian Oystercatcher contains a cornucopia of detailed information. Indeed, few organisms are known well enough to permit the ambitious and sophisticated analysis attempted in this work. The book's stated goals are to: (1) explore the extent to which theory explains the behavior of a well-studied bird in nature and how field studies may in turn influence the theory, and (2) show how studies of the variation between individuals can be used to understand and predict the behavior of populations. It succeeds. The last theme reflects the modern-day imperative of conservation biology, and this book is a nice example of how fuzzy the distinction is between basic and applied research.

The book is divided into two parts. Part I ("Individual Adaptations") contains 10 chapters, whose overall emphasis is on the decision rules used by individuals when choosing between alternative foraging or breeding strategies. Those decision rules are central to deriving population-level phenomena from studies of individuals, the topic addressed in the second part of the book. The first five chapters focus on foraging decisions of how, on what, where, and when to feed. The next four chapters discuss migration and breeding decisions made concerning how, where, when, and with whom to establish a territory and raise chicks. Chapter 10 brings the Eurasian Oystercatcher into perspective by making comparisons with the world's 11 other oystercatcher species. Part II ("Population Ecology") contains three chapters. The first reviews anthropogenic changes that are taking place in Eurasian Oystercatcher habitats and evaluates their possible effect on the birds. The last two chapters develop an approach for modeling carrying capacity for local populations and understanding the overall dynamics of the meta-population, with the ultimate goal of predicting the effect of environmental changes on the birds at these levels.

Twenty-five authors from 9 countries combined to produce the book's 13 chapters. Most (68%) are from England and The Netherlands, where most western European oystercatchers live. The collaboration so evident in much oystercatcher research is apparent in the book, with an average of 3.8 authors per chapter and each author participating in an average of two chapters. The editor's involvement as co-author of six chapters, and author of the book's introduction and conclusion, undoubtedly helped tie it all together. The book

is extensively referenced (720 citations), current (171 citations from the 1990s), and has a useful index.

So impressive is the information available on oystercatchers that it is almost a surprise to learn that there are things yet to be discovered. This book identifies the unknowns. For example, where do young birds go during their first few months on the wintering grounds, and how does this relate to their well-documented site faithfulness? Is this when they acquire an awareness of their options for making decisions about alternative behavioral strategies? What are the relative contributions of the intrinsic (age, sex, fighting ability) vs. situational (site) components of dominance? What is the relationship between winter and summer diets with respect to feeding specialization (which is not as rigid as was once thought)?

A sampler of intriguing questions raised in this book follows. Why are there no oystercatcher species in the Old World tropics? Eurasian Oystercatcher pairs begin to copulate up to two months before the first eggs are laid (ca. 700 times or once every two hours)—why do they copulate so often? Why do oystercatchers feed their precocial chicks? The Haematopodidae are unique in having chicks with full precocial mobility that are almost fully nourished by parental feeding. The argument is made that this gives chicks the “altruistic benefit” of faster growth rates due to being fed by experienced adults while at the same time they gain the “precocial benefit” of antipredator mobility, and that this unique situation depends upon the ability of parents to exploit large and difficult food items. The fascinating speculation of the authors is that this rare state may be evolutionarily unstable and that the recent trend toward inland breeding in Eurasian Oystercatchers (which is due to agricultural development) may select for self-feeding in chicks, as is typical in the Charadrii. Another interesting possibility regarding the increasing number of inland breeding oystercatchers is suggested by the population model in Chapter 13—they may out-compete the slower breeding coastal birds on their common wintering grounds and therefore increase at their expense.

The nuances of the social organization of oystercatchers outlined in this volume will be fascinating to behavioral ecologists. For example, in Chapter 8 the distinction is made between “career decisions” which affect the social position of the bird (which indirectly affects its reproductive success) and “reproductive decisions” which directly affect its breeding success (through clutch size, parental effort, etc.). These are not trivial matters in a bird that first breeds at 3–5 years of age (in some cases at 14 years!) and may live 40 years or more.

As reviewers will do, I can mention a few criticisms. Typos were infrequent, and mostly of a minor grammatical nature, but an omitted hyphen in Table 10.1 caused the first breeding age for *H. o. ostralegus* to be listed as 35 years (which would be a zoological record!) rather than 3–5 years. In Figure 3.8, the key to bill-tip shapes for the sexes is reversed and the legend for Figure 8.10 (d) is grammatically misstated. I thought the authors of Chapter 9 missed an opportunity to use the Recurvirostridae for comparison with the Haematopodidae, given that most taxonomic analyses

have concluded that these families are closely related. Chapter 10, on the comparative biology of oystercatchers, was one of my personal favorites. However, the author seems to assume that the fact that different *Haematopus* species occur sympatrically today means that they evolved sympatrically. I was surprised to find that this chapter did not cite the *Birds of North America* accounts on the two North American species (published in 1994 and 1995). One of the few inconsistencies I found in the book was that oystercatchers breeding in Norway are considered a Continental population in Chapter 7 but an Atlantic population in Chapter 13.

I learned a lot from reading this book, and I highly recommend it to shorebird aficionados, ornithologists conducting in-depth research on single species, and to conservation biologists and managers trying to understand population-level processes. Its value as a model gives it broader appeal than just a book about some European bird, and probably all university and museum libraries should have it.—TEX A. SORDAHL, Department of Biology, Luther College, Decorah, IA 52101-1045, e-mail: sordahl@luther.edu

**Song of the Dodo: Island Biogeography in an Age of Extinction.**—David Quammen. 1996. Simon and Schuster, New York. 704 pp. ISBN 0-684-82712-3 \$17.00 (paper). ISBN 0-684-80083-7 \$32.00 (cloth).

As with many great books, *Song of the Dodo* begins quietly. The first pages give a quick review of the origins and basic principles of island biogeography. However, one quickly realizes there is more to this tome than what one would find in a mere textbook or review. It is an exquisite blend of stylish writing, scientific principle, and historical context that will keep the reader coming back for more.

Much of the first part of the book is dedicated to the historical context of island biogeographical theory. Quammen provides an in-depth characterization of Alfred Russell Wallace and Charles Darwin, and their contributions to island biogeography and evolutionary biology. For this alone, it would be worth reading the book, but there is more . . . much more.

After providing an historical background we begin an around the world journey, looking through Quammen's eyes, in an attempt to better understand principles of island biogeography. Each stop on this tour gives us insight into factors that make island biogeography a topic of such interest. We visit Komodo to see the giant Komodo dragons, Madagascar to see lemurs, the Galapagos for Darwin's Finches and giant tortoises, and Mauritius, former home of the Dodo (*Raphus cucullatus*). At each location Quammen writes about the appropriate aspects of biogeographical theory: dispersal, gigantism, dwarfism, speciation, and adaptive radiation. We are introduced to the researchers who study these aspects, and gain further insight, through description of their investigations, about how these aspects work. Perhaps sadly, we are given the necessary lesson on the role of extinction in island biogeography. From Guam, where brown tree snakes have decimated the avifauna, to the Colorado River, where water snakes are threatened by proposed dams, to Mauritius, where the endemic Mauritius Kestrel

(*Falco punctatus*) holds on by a thread and the hard work of a few dedicated scientists.

Much of the final part of the book deals with explaining how island biogeography can be applied to not only islands, but the entire world. Quammen discusses the role of humans as agents of extinction and dispersal, fragmentation of the landscape, and how our parks and reserves, protected for the benefit of wildlife, are becoming islands unto themselves. We also get an introduction of conservation efforts being undertaken throughout the world. Of particular value is the overview and the ongoing projects, such as Tom Lovejoy's study of fragmented Brazilian forests, that are influencing how conservation decisions, such as size and shape of reserves, are determined.

If one criticism can be made about this book, it is that the length is somewhat more than is necessary. Unusual animals and far-away places are all interesting, but by the end of the book some readers may grow tired of the endless parade of such wonders. Even so, the book is marvelously written and provides a fabulous overview of island biogeography. By the end of *Song of the Dodo* any reader should have a much better understanding of the processes of evolution, adaptation, and extinction. This book would be a valuable asset for both the scientist with an interest in those subjects and the layperson who wishes to gain more understanding of them. It would be excellent as the subject of a biological seminar, and is a must for any library.—JOHN W. PRATHER, Department of Biological Sciences, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR 72701, e-mail: jprathe@comp.uark.edu

**Southern Illinois Birds: An Annotated List and Site Guide**—W. Douglas Robinson. 1996. Southern Illinois University Press, Carbondale, IL. 432 pp. 16 maps. 24 black and white photos. ISBN 0-8093-2032-0. \$39.95 (cloth).

This is a book about the distribution and abundance of birds in the 17 counties that make up southern Illinois. It is divided into two major parts, an annotated list section, and a site guide section, with a 24 page introduction that contains a nice history of bird study in southern Illinois and a discussion of current conservation problems and possible solutions.

The annotated list, which is 360 pages, contains many observations and anecdotes by the author and is obviously written by someone with an enormous amount of field experience in the area. Each species' distribution and abundance are given by season, and when appropriate by physiographic region, and are inferred primarily from observations of birders who have worked southern Illinois. Most of that information is contained under the headings: Migration Dates, Status and Distribution, Habitat, and Records and Remarks.

Migration Dates, somewhat contrary to the name, gives periods of expected occurrence, whether they are migratory periods or not. For example, Hooded Warblers (*Wilsonia citrina*) occur from late April to mid September. Status and Distribution briefly tells how abundance varies with season and, when applicable, with physiographic region. Thus Summer Tanager (*Piranga rubra*) is a fairly common migrant in all physiographic regions, but is a fairly common summer res-

ident only in the Shawnee Hills, and is an uncommon summer resident elsewhere. Habitat gives a brief description of preferred habitats of each species. Finally, Records and Remarks is a listing by season of significant records such as high counts and extreme dates, prefaced by additional information on habitat, foraging and nesting behavior, frequency of cowbird parasitism, migration peak times, and/or anything else that might be of interest. The remarks are more detailed than those in most other books of this type and thus lend increased significance to any behavioral/ecological observations that may be made by users of the book. For example, if a Cooper's Hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*) nest is found in a deciduous tree, the user will find that this is unusual in southern Illinois; or that while Wood Thrushes (*Hylocichla mustelina*) commonly are parasitized by cowbirds, robins are so affected only rarely, making an observation of a young cowbird being fed by either species more meaningful. Most regional bird books contain information on each species' status, distribution, and records of high counts. *Southern Illinois Birds* goes a little further by including more behavioral/ecological information, and thus provides a contextual framework for many such observations.

I have no substantial criticism of that portion of the book. Minor criticisms include some omissions when field marks are included in Records and Remarks. For example, in telling Ross' Goose (*Chen rossii*) from Snow Goose (*C. caerulescens*), the conspicuously shorter and smaller bill (probably the single most useful mark) is not even mentioned; in telling the waterthrushes apart, differences in color and shape of the eyebrows (arguably the most useful marks) are not discussed. Another problem involves failure to distinguish between winter and juvenile plumages for some shorebirds, such as Lesser Golden-Plover (*Pluvialis dominica*) and Red Knot (*Calidris canutus*).

The site guide portion is about 44 pages long and covers 27 birding locations, 19 in some detail and 8 very briefly. Although this is a fair number of sites, a disproportionate number are concentrated in the southwestern quarter of the region - especially those with detailed coverage. Directions to each site generally are clear and specific, and are aided by maps that illustrate 14 of them. Species that one can expect to see and varieties that have been found previously, but that one would be lucky to see, are listed for most sites, but a heavy emphasis is placed on particular groups of birds at particular seasons. At Rend Lake, for example, places to look for shorebirds in both spring and fall are stressed, while "landbirds" (especially breeding birds) and places to find them are only described sparingly. This is true despite the existence of many interesting "landbirds" records for Rend Lake in the annotated list portion of the book. However, even though there is room for improvement, almost anyone planning to go birding in southern Illinois will find this guide useful.

*Southern Illinois Birds* provides a good picture of the status of birds in the region, and also describes well the highlights of the region's best birding spots, although the latter could be expanded. It is a book well worth having in either a university, museum, community, or personal (if one can afford the price) library.—MICHAEL MLODINOW, Apartment E, 545 N. Gregg Avenue, Fayetteville, AR 72701.