

BOOK REVIEW**British Birds of Prey. 1976. Leslie Brown
Collins New Naturalist Series £6.**

Leslie Brown will be best known to American ornithologists as the coauthor of *Eagles, Hawks, and Falcons of the World* in which he shared the honors with Dean Amadon. This new book concentrates on the species that breed within the British Isles. It is not just another book, but the definitive work on the subject.

Mr. Brown has amassed a vast wealth of data from a wide variety of sources, much of it hitherto unpublished. Typical of his many interesting observations is that a buzzard is able to see a grasshopper—against a background of its own color—at a distance of 110 yards, a visual acuity four times greater than that of man.

The book runs to nearly four hundred pages, all crammed with absorbing information. There are chapters on all the British breeding species, classification, food habits, territory, conservation, pesticides (Mr. Brown, agriculturalist, is able to make a more accurate assessment than most), and one headed “Some burning issues.” No punches are pulled; the facts are dealt with fairly and squarely! Fortunately for us, he takes a remarkably tolerant view of falconry. The real enemy is not so much pesticides, but greed and stupidity; the wilful destruction of raptors by gamekeepers, often with the connivance of their masters; pigeon fanciers; and the wanton desires of phoney falconers and ‘hawkkeepers,’ plus the unwitting thoughtlessness of man, “twitchers” in particular. A twitcher is Mr. Brown’s word for a tally-hunter.

The discriminative reader will spot a slight discrepancy between the age given for the Sun Life Peregrine of Montreal, the figure quoted is 12 years, not 17 (as in Hickey), but this is a trivial matter in a book of such magnitude. Anyone studying the birds of prey will find it an indispensable source of reference and an extremely good value at £6.

R. B. Treleven.

INFORMATION ON ACCIPITERS REQUESTED

At present I am preparing a manuscript on the biology and current population status of the three North America accipiters, the Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper’s Hawk, and Goshawk. Upon completion this paper will be published through the Bureau of Land Management as a technical note in the Habitat Management Series.

I am requesting information about current research projects on accipiters in North America. Data on the regional status of the three species is also needed. Any information which you could provide would be greatly appreciated. All communications and data will be acknowledged appropriately in the paper.

Thank you very much. Address all correspondences to Stephen Jones, Department of Zoology, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah 84602.