

Geographic Society, the President of the National Wildlife Federation, and CBS News. I agree in part with those comments, in that the photography is excellent, the film does hold your attention, and it does tell an environmentally important story. The dedication of Jack Swedberg to returning the Bald Eagle to Quabbin reservoir as a breeding bird cannot be denied after viewing the film. There are portions of the film, however, which require additional comment.

It is unfortunate that the issue of habitat alteration in western Massachusetts was not dealt with more intensively. Instead of the recurring discussion of DDT's impact, educational though it may be, it would have been equally educational and interesting to discuss "before and after" documentation of nesting locations within the Bald Eagle's former range in Massachusetts.

At one point in the discussion of the eagle's extirpation in Massachusetts, Swedberg makes the statement that "at the time, no one thought of the idea of hacking eagles." Although an informed viewer would not support such a statement, the uninformed viewer possibly would. Perhaps Swedberg was the first person to think of such an idea in Massachusetts, as was probably the statement's purpose, but the reintroduction of the Bald Eagle into areas elsewhere in the United States has been carried out for several years by numerous organizations and individuals. Nevertheless, the viewer is left with the impression that the film is documenting somewhat of a first. This would be true only on a local level.

Another point of concern is Swedberg's statement that "the eagle is primarily a fish-eater." It has been well documented that the Bald Eagle's diet can be much more varied, and in some wintering areas the diet may consist primarily of mammalian or avian prey, and carrion. Again, such statements might be misleading to an uninformed viewer learning about the Bald Eagle for the first time. General statements concerning the biology of the species should have been carefully edited.

The cost of the film is not warranted from a scientific point of view. However, I would recommend the film on a junior high school or high school level as an introduction to man's efforts to return raptors to former nesting grounds. Although not the quality of the National Audubon Society's 1981 film "Last Stronghold of the Eagles," HOME FREE provides an educational and informative documentary of the effort that is required in attempting to restore the Bald Eagle into its former nesting localities. Although most raptor biologists are well familiar with such undertakings, the general public is not. Education about raptors should be a primary area of concern as we close out the 1980s and move into the 1990s. Films such as HOME FREE are important as a means of educating the public at an early age, an education that hopefully will be remembered later in life. — Jimmie R. Parrish.

DISSERTATION ABSTRACTS

The Feeding Ecology and Breeding Biology of a Cape Vulture Colony in the Southwestern Cape Province

A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Science,
University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg,
for the degree of Master of Science.

Johannesburg 1983

Cape Vultures (*Gyps coprotheres*) at Potberg obtain their food from stock farms, within a limited area surrounding the colony. The size of the foraging range was determined by means of a postal survey, and the quantity of food available within it was estimated to exceed the colony's requirements. Data pertaining to daily feeding forays of individuals, monthly foraging patterns and the growth of nestlings indicated no seasonal shortages in the amount of food obtained.

One complete breeding cycle and another two post-fledging dependence periods were observed during 165 days. Results concerning deferred maturity, frequency and success of breeding, a sex-linked difference in behaviour, nestling parasites, behaviour of dependent juveniles, aggressive terminations of the post-fledging period and survival of marked individuals, were obtained. It is suggested that the transition to feeding exclusively on sheep carcasses has not been achieved with equal success by all age groups. — **Robertson, Alistair Stuart, 1983. M.S. thesis, Faculty of Science, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa.**

DEDICATION — William Ruttledge wishes to dedicate in retrospect his paper entitled "Captive Breeding of the European Merlin (*Falco columbarius aesalon*), which appeared in Volume 19(2/3), 1985, pp. 68-78 of *Raptor Research*, to the memory of his wife, Dorothy, and in recognition of the very great contribution that she made to the preparation of the manuscript which, sadly, she did not live to see in print.

Mr. Ruttledge takes the opportunity also to give more adequate recognition to the very extensive and invaluable advice given throughout his work by Dr. L. H. Hurrell from his wide experience in captive breeding, including the preparation of MK I and MK II mice (see page 70 of the article).