

NEWS AND REVIEWS

A Dictionary of Ethology by Klaus Immelmann and Colin Beer. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England, 1989. 336 pp. Cost, hardcover, \$35.00 U.S.

We have good news for fellow lexicophiles (i.e., those who compulsively browse through dictionaries), especially those with a behavioral bent. Over the last 2 decades, several volumes defining the vernacular of ethology have appeared on the market. The publication listed above (hereafter, Dictionary) is the most recent book attempting to clarify the terms and concepts of animal behavior.

This volume is, in our opinion, the most useful to students of ethology. In a text that is well-organized, attractively illustrated (about 20 line and stipple drawings), and largely error-free, the authors present about 700 terms in clear concise language. They provide not only a definition, but also examples, information on the origin of the term, very often a synonym, and, even more useful, an evaluation of the current value of each term.

Classifying the book as a dictionary somewhat disguises its full value. The volume includes much more information than would be expected even in an unabridged dictionary. Rather, the tome appears to be a powerful attempt to canonize the preferred terminology of ethology. Far beyond merely defining terms, it provides a commentary on which terms have come into general use, which have not, and which are so abused in the literature (e.g., instinct, motivation) that they are now of little use to the scientist. The book also provides definitions and clarifications of terms which even the serious student of ethology has probably given little thought.

To illustrate the Dictionary's value as a clarifier of appropriate uses for specific terms, let's examine the term, "interaction". Define the term in your own mind and state all appropriate uses as you perceive them. Next, compare your perceptions with the 3 uses presented by the authors: (1) an encounter between animals, (2) an influence of an animal on its environment or vice versa, and (3) in a statistical sense, the synergistic influence of 2 or more variables on an animal or its environment. Now, decide if you have not in fact sharpened and deepened your own perceptions of the ethological concept. With the dictionary in hand, of course, this exercise is much more effective as you examine, in this case, 13 lines of text rather than our terse summary of the 3 uses of the term.

As much as we recommend the book, in our role as critics, we must state a few minor concerns. First, this volume covers a wider range of terms than would be expected for an ethological dictionary. It is surprising to see that the authors have included definitions for such basic biological terms as gamete, embryo, fossil, FSH, and many more. Second, as students of raptor ecology, we take exception to the authors citing raptors as prime examples of species for which the adults commit infanticide (i.e., the authors interpret nestling neglect [passive] as a form of infanticide [active]). Third, although over 75 publications from the primary and secondary literature are cited in the text, most terms and concepts, even when lengthy, remain uncited. Perhaps this omission was essential in controlling the length of the text, but the result of this exclusion is that the book is much less useful as a means of entering the ethological literature.

Finally, Beer states in the preface that the authors excluded highly technical terms (e.g., the names/titles of specific behavioral acts) to make the book more useful to the non-specialist. Fortunately, titles and definitions of a few of these specialized terms are available in Heymer's *Ethological Dictionary* (Verlag Paul Parey, Berlin and Hamburg, 1977). In our opinion, however, Immelmann and Beer missed a propitious opportunity. The time is ripe for the presentation of standard terminology naming homologous behavioral acts (ethons) that are common to different taxonomic groups. Standardization is possible for some ethons at least as high as the Class level. Shaking (of the body), various feeding ethons, and many more could be linked by common terminology. A few ethons (e.g., yawning, stretching, and running as performed by different taxonomic Classes) are so obviously related that their titles have received *de facto* standardization even without the ethologist's help. Many more terms could also be standardized but the authors have refused to do so on the grounds that including highly specialized terms would "overload" the text. They canonize instead such curious terms as "shake to death."

Even with this omission, we consider the Dictionary invaluable in clarifying ethological concepts and facilitating communication between ethologists and other scientists in related fields. Immelmann and Beer have provided a powerful tool for refining concepts and thereby generating original thought, the mechanism of discovery in any branch of science. **David H. Ellis and Linda J. Miller, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, Laurel, MD 20708.**

James R. Koplin Travel Award. In honor of Dr. James R. Koplin, the Raptor Research Foundation, Inc., established an endowment to support the travel of students to annual RRF meetings. Dr. Koplin was a professor of wildlife management at Humboldt State University, in Arcata, California, and had a long-term interest in the study of raptor distribution and abundance. All students are eligible to apply for this award; however, because of Dr. Koplin's interest in Latin American raptors, preference will be given to applicants from the neotropics. This program was initiated at the 1989 RRF meeting held in Veracruz, Mexico, and consists of a \$100 award. In the future, as the endowment permits, more awards in greater amounts will be provided. Selection of the recipients of this award will be based on the quality of the research conducted, financial need, and professional potential as a raptor biologist.

To be eligible for the Koplin Travel Award, a student must be a member of the Raptor Research Foundation, Inc., and the senior author on a paper to be presented at the meeting for which travel funds are requested. To apply for the 1990 award, students must submit their request to the J. R. Koplin Travel Awards Committee Chairperson by 1 September 1990.

Application materials include: (1) a two-page (double-spaced) description of the research results to be presented at the meeting; (2) an itemized budget of the total cost associated with attending the meeting, accompanied by an explanation of how the expenses not covered by this award will be met; and (3) a letter of recommendation. This letter is very important in the selection process and should be written by the student's major professor. It should contain a thorough evaluation of the applicant's academic abilities, the significance of the research being reported, his or her contribution to this research, and the potential for future contributions by the student to the field. **Send application to Michael W. Collopy, James R. Koplin Travel Award Committee, % Dept. of Wildlife and Range Sciences, 118 Newins-Ziegler Hall, 0304 IFAS, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida 32611-0304 USA.**

Course Study on Birds of Prey. The Institute of Conservation and Ecology at the University of Kent at Canterbury is offering a 2-yr part-time course in the study of birds of prey leading to an advanced university diploma in raptor biology. The program is comprised of 2 parts: a 100-hr instructed course dealing with all aspects of raptor biology, and an individual study project. The course is designed for anyone with a genuine interest in raptors including enthusiastic amateurs, curators of raptor collections and conservation workers. Part I will commence in the 1989/90 academic year. For further details on the program outline, admission requirements and fees please write to: **Mike Nicholls, Christ Church College, Canterbury CT1 1QU, U.K.**

BIOLOGY & CONSERVATION OF SMALL FALCONS

A three day Conference under the aegis of
THE HAWK TRUST
 and hosted by the
DURRELL INSTITUTE OF CONSERVATION AND ECOLOGY
 at the University of Kent at Canterbury, England
 on 6-8 September 1991

The study of the smaller falcons is often neglected in favour of that of the larger species.

The theme of the Conference will therefore be aspects of the biology and conservation of kestrels, merlins, hobbies and other small raptors, particularly, but not exclusively, in the genus *Falco*.

Topics to be covered at the conference will include aspects of taxonomy and evolution, ecology and behaviour, health and disease, captive breeding and associated research.

Further offers of papers and poster demonstrations are invited, and requests for more information should be sent to: **Mike Nicholls, Christ Church College, CANTERBURY, Kent, CT1 1QU, England.**

Tully Memorial Research Funds Available. The Raptor Research Foundation will provide a \$600 grant from the Stephen R. Tully Memorial Fund for research, management, or conservation of birds of prey. Students and serious amateurs are encouraged to apply. Send 5 copies of a succinct proposal (5 pages maximum), outlining your background, study goals and methods, anticipated budget, and other funding requests to **James H. Enderson, Chairman, Tully Grant Committee, Colorado College, Colorado Springs, CO 80903.** Applications must be received by 10 September 1990, and the award will be announced in October 1990.