

Recent Books

All Year Birding in Southern New Jersey. — James F. Akers. Atlantic Audubon Society (P.O. Box 63, Absecon, NJ 08201). 1981. 74 pp. \$4.00 (incl. postage and handling). This fine handbook, published posthumously after the untimely death of the author on a local birding trip, is a tribute to his powers of observation and his intimate familiarity with the region described. Akers certainly did his homework and he leads us informatively through the area of South Jersey as defined as south of Barnegat Light and east of Woodbury, all the way south to Cape May Point. He covers eight main public birding areas and sub-areas in and around those areas. There are 25 maps accompanying the text, one of which is a topographic map highlighting the major habitats to be found in South Jersey. The book is well-written, edited and proofread and should definitely accompany any birding trip to the region.—S.R.D.

Annotated Checklist of the Birds of Arizona. — Second edition. Gale Monson and Allan R. Phillips. The University of Arizona Press. Tucson, AZ. 1981. \$5.95 paperbound. Another remarkably ambitious collaboration of Monson and Phillips which updates the first edition from 1960 through 1980. This, used in conjunction with *The Birds of Arizona* (A. Phillips, J. Marshall and G. Monson, 1964) should be more than sufficient to familiarize any student with the avifauna of Arizona. It is a welcome and needed addition to the state's ornithological literature and by so thor-

oughly covering the status and range descriptions of 475 species and subspecies, is a model for others of this ilk.—S.R.D.

An Atlas of the Birds of Western Palearctic. — Colin Harrison. Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J. 1982. 332 pp. Ill. 673 maps in several colors of the summer, winter and resident distributions of 639 species of the birds of Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East. Cartography by Crispin Fisher, \$25. It should be discouraging to all of us involved with American ornithology that so many well-written, illustrated, and produced books these days originate elsewhere. Book after handsome book, "published" with the imprimatur of an American university press or commercial publisher, turns out to be an import whose only American contribution is a specially-printed title page. This atlas takes up where the European field guides leave off, with beautifully clear, carefully detailed maps, an accompanying text for each species, and for many species, useful wash drawings. An introduction discusses the varieties of bird distribution and the causes of recent changes. There


is a selective bibliography. Similar maps for all these species will eventually also be found in the giant *Handbook of the Birds of Europe*, etc., Stanley Cramp, Ed., but completion of that 7-volume work is still some years off. In the meanwhile, this admirable atlas is, by today's measure, a bargain.—R.A.

Australian Parrots, in bush and aviary.—Ian Harman, 1982. David & Charles, North Pomfret, Vt. 211. color photographs. 200 pp. \$32. The parrots of Australia are justly renowned, and are the subject of an almost endless procession of books enhanced by pictures of their handsome subjects. The special concern of Harman's book is in the care and breeding of cagebirds, and the illustrations—color photographs—appear to be mostly of captive birds. Introductory chapters treat the history of European knowledge of Australian parrots, aviary construction, captive breeding, feeding and ailments. Species treatments come under the headings of nomenclature, description of males and females, sexing, varieties and hybrids, distribution, field notes, aviary notes, and breeding. The color reproduction is of high quality, but what is surprising is

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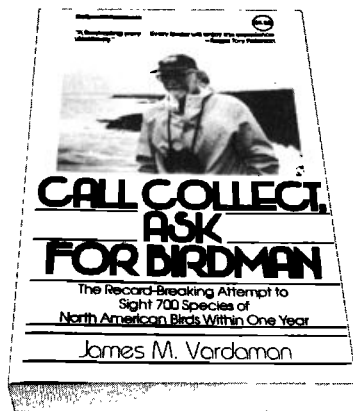
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that these colorful birds seem more beautiful in the paintings of William T. Cooper (*in Parrots of the World*, by Joseph M. Forshaw 1973) than they do here in close-up color photography. (cage wear?) A few species are not illustrated. There is a strong conservationist tone to Harman's work, and it is heartening to know that almost all captive parrots from Australia are now cage-bred.—RA.

A Bird-Finding Guide to Ontario. — Clive E. Goodwin. University of Toronto Press. 1982. 248 pp. \$12.50 paperbound. We are always on the 'listen-in' for regional bird finding guides of consequence and Goodwin has here produced a top-notch volume we certainly recommend to everyone planning to bird in the 412,582 square miles of Ontario. He guides the birder to the best-known localities in the province and reduces the otherwise intimidating space to knowable birding sites. These natural areas range from deciduous woodlands in the south to arctic coastline in the north. The four main sections of the book are: general information on Ontario birds and their status in the province; regional accounts (the main

body of the book); information for the birder on getting around, accommodations, finding fellow birders, various hazards and additional reading; and systematic lists of species. Maps, accompany each region and are intended for use with current provincial highway road maps. Goodwin obviously has a sure grasp on the avifauna and its habitats, migration patterns and breeding sites. In total, good show!—S.R D

Birding the Delaware Valley Region — John J. Harding and Justin J. Harding. Temple University Press. Philadelphia, PA. 1980, 223 pp. \$13.95 hardbound, \$6.95 paperbound. If I were choosing the ten or so top bird-finding guides for the eastern United States, *Birding the Delaware Valley Region* would have a high place on that list. The most obvious reason is that the Hardings do a fine job because they got their material first hand. They've been right in the middle of the 60+ places they described in southeastern Pennsylvania, central and southern New Jersey, and north central Delaware. All of these sites are within a two-hour automobile drive of Philadelphia and the coverage of each site is admirably thorough

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I almost didn't buy it because the title did not seem to offer much to a birder from Michigan. I would have been much quicker to get it if I had realized how much good ID info there is contained within.

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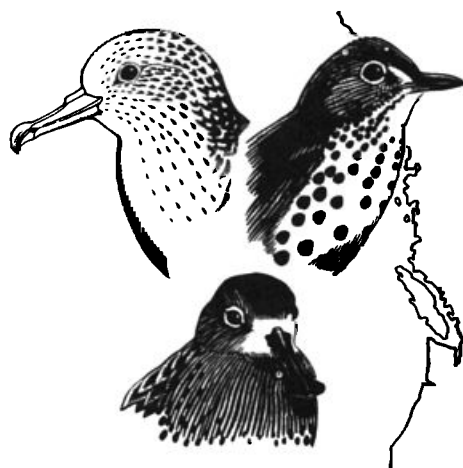
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There are 31 nicely executed and helpful maps, an annotated list of 335 species found in the area, elucidating each species' abundance and seasonal frequency and a list of accidental or casual species, a bibliography and index. The area covered in the book is rich in avian delights and the treatment of sites both individually and collectively constitute the sort of detailed analysis an active birder appreciates.—S.R.D.

Birds by the Dempster Highway. — Robert Frisch. Available from the author. 1982. 107 pp. \$3.50. This inexpensively produced and priced 5½" × 8½" format book will be enormously useful to anyone who yields to the temptation to go birding in the Yukon. Following the introduction, Frisch discusses the habitats covered and the practical aspects of birding there. Ten more pages cover the general distribution, range extensions, and birds of special interest and nearly 70 pages are species accounts. Although the book covers only the Dempster Highway strip stretching from just east of Dawson City north, and east to Inuvik in the Northwest Territories, the road traverses rich wooded valley bottoms, rock-strewn slopes, arctic alpine barrens, wide reaches of tundra, and enormous tracts of taiga forest. From the road and within 8 km of it on either side, 155 species of birds have been recorded with three others found nearby. Mid-May to late June is the optimal time to bird the road. Before going get this valuable and fascinating overview of the area's avifauna.—S.R.D.

Birds of Manitoulin Island and adjacent islands within Manitoulin District.

— John C. Nicholson. Second Edition. Available through the Nature Canada Bookshop, Ottawa. \$7.00 paperbound. 204 pp. + pull-out map. This is a vital new source of information on those islands in Lake Huron southeast of Michigan's Upper Peninsula and northwest of Georgian Bay and the Bruce Peninsula, Ontario. The book begins with a 25-page Testament to Birdwatching which is cleverly written, imaginatively illustrated, and immensely readable. A physiographic description, and social and ornithological histories of the area follow. One hundred fifty pages of species accounts describe the demographic characteristics of the 295 species recognized in the region. The black-and-white line drawings by Kenneth Baldrige and Christopher G. Bloome add greatly to the visual quality of the work. In total, this is not just another regional study. Nicholson's vitality and alertness to the natural world set this book far above the majority of others in this genre.—S.R.D.

The Cotingas, Bellbirds, umbrellabirds, and other species. — David W. Snow. Color illustrations by Martin W. Woodcock. Cornell University Press

(published in cooperation with the British Museum of Natural History). 1982. 203 pp. \$45. hardbound. With the exception of the birds of paradise, the members of Cotingidae are, with their beautiful and sometimes bizarre adornments and ornamentations, and their oftentimes resplendent plumages, certainly among the most fascinating subjects of bird study. Additionally, their social organizations and coadaptations with the plants that provide them food are singularly curious. Because the family Cotingidae has never been monographed and because the literature on its 65 species appears in widespread and dissimilar ornithological journals this volume represents a major contribution. The first four chapters treat points of general biological interest; including the origin, classification, and distributional history of the cotingas; the evolution and sociobiology of cotingas, and their color and display structures and their annual breeding cycle. The remainder and majority of the book is devoted to comprehensive species accounts which especially highlight the behavior and ecology of the 65 cotinga species. Each account is complete with discussions of plumages, molts and

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physical characteristics and measurements of each species. There are 30 distributional maps delineating the lowland forest and montane radiation of each species. Martin Woodcock has executed 22 paintings from which the color plates were made and their reproduction quality is excellent and evocative of the brilliant plumages of the birds they depict. David Snow has brought his customary and well-known erudition and technical perfection to this study and the result is a superb volume. It is a thoroughgoing pleasure to recom-

mend *The Cotingas*.—S.R.D.

The Cuckoo. — Ian Wyllie. Universe Books, New York. 1981. Ill. drawings, maps, many photographs, 15 in color. 176 pp. \$30, clothbound. The cuckoo in question is the fascinating, parasitic European Cuckoo, *Cuculus canoris*, and although this engrossing study details its life history from egg through development of the young, food and feeding behavior, song, social system, breeding biology, and migration, it goes beyond the "clock" cuckoo to encompass the entire family; classification, distribution, parasitism. Comparisons with our Black-billed and Yellow-billed cuckoos, and the habits of our anis, give insights into the origins and benefits of parasitism. Wyllie spent six years in the field watching and photographing the cuckoos, finding in the process 1764 Reed Warbler nests, 170 of them parasitized. His amazing photographs show females in the act of egg-laying (host bird's egg in bill), during a nest visit that can take as little as 10 seconds, and perhaps even more unbelievable, the way in which a newly hatched cuckoo, only a few hours old, weak and

blind, can empty the host nest of other eggs. Few birds give us more food for thought and theory, speculation and study, and we must be grateful to Wyllie for a truly stimulating work.—R.A.

A Dichotomous Key to the Shorebirds of North America. — Richard Mellon. Mellon Biological Services. P.O. Box 63. Morrisville PA 19067. 1981. 24 pp. \$2.95. If you're tired of flipping from one field guide to another for identification help with shorebirds, take heart. This impressive field-guide-sized key will be useful for the veteran charadriophile and converted novice alike. Mellon's system, like all dichotomous keys, simplifies recognition by presenting two alternatives. The more likely alternative for the bird in doubt is chosen and then the user proceeds to the number next indicated. Once more the more correct choice is made and the birder moves on to the next number. That process is continued until the bird is identified. Theoretically it is quite simple. Of course, it won't always work but after field testing it, my judgment is that it works often and reliably enough to make it a valuable addition to the guide(s) and notebook one usually carries afield.—S.R.D.

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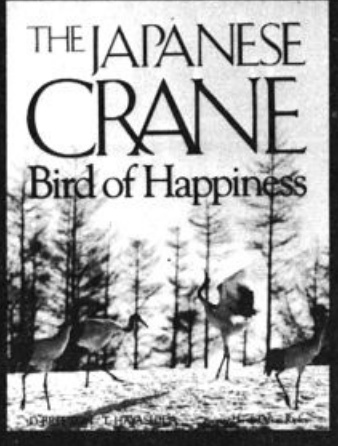
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Diseases of Cage and Aviary Birds. Second Edition. — Margaret L. Petrak, editor. Lea and Febiger, Philadelphia. 1982. xii + 680 pp. hardbound. \$89.50. With numerous illustrations and 19 color plates. Rarely has a publication in the veterinary field been more eagerly awaited, more totally comprehensive, or more avidly acclaimed than was Petrak's first edition of this book in 1969. Although the format of this new edition is essentially the same, the thirty contributing authors have made major revisions in a number of chapters reflecting recent advances in avian physiology, surgery, anesthesia, genetics, etc. The book is divided into two main sections. The first part deals with such non-clinical aspects as types of cage birds, caging and environment, avian behavior, nutrition, care of orphan birds, and physiology. Particularly noteworthy is the chapter on the anatomy of the Budgerigar which includes over forty beautiful drawings to aid the reader in understanding such things as preening or the intricacies of avian respiration. Also excellent is the chapter on genetics by P.A. Buckley with eleven color plates illustrating polygenic in-

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heritance, polymorphism, and hybridization.

The second part of the book, clinical considerations, is perhaps the most complete compendium of avian medicine and surgery in print at this time. Beginning with methods of examination and treatment, this section proceeds with a discussion of avian diseases classified according to both organ system affected and etiologic agent involved. A highlight for this reviewer was a new chapter on radiology. Although some of the radiographs suffer in transfer to the printed page, the net effect is to provide the avian practitioner with a good general introduction to this valuable diagnostic modality. The book concludes with chapters on poisoning, wild bird casualties, oil pollution, and last, but not least, bird-caused zoonotic diseases. This book is clearly written and understandable even to those with only a rudimentary scientific background. A magnificent book . . . belongs on the shelf of any person involved in the health of caged birds.—R.L.S.

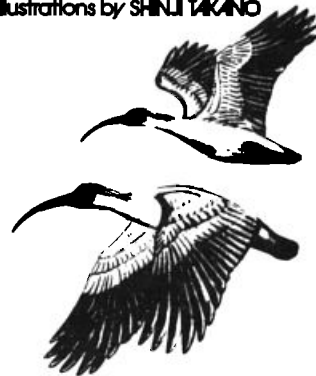
Estrildid finches of the world. — Derek Goodwin. British Museum (Natural History), distributed in America by Comstock Publishing Assn of Cornell Univ. Press, Ithaca. 1982. 328 pp. large 8vo. Ill. many maps, drawings, 8 pp. in full color by Martin Woodcock. \$45. The Estrildid family is becoming increasingly familiar to Americans. Nine species are now successfully introduced in Hawaii, adding an entire family to the tail end of the new A.O.U. Check-list; some of our luckier readers have seen some of these colorful birds in their native Africa; perhaps many more are familiar with the most colorful species as cage birds. Derek Goodwin, a senior zoologist at the British Museum, has written this scholarly treatise in the thorough manner of his earlier "handbooks," one on *Pigeons and Doves of the World* (1967), the other on *Crows of the World* (1976). Each of the 140 species in 32 genera is treated under the headings of description, field characters, distribution and habitat, feeding and general habits, nesting, voice, display and social behavior, other names, and references, and there is a distribution map. Five preliminary chapters introduce us to this attractive and interesting family, with its Gouldian Finches, Beautiful Firetails, Peter's Twinspot, waxbills, cordon-bleus, av-

adavats, cutthroats, munias, and mannikins. But why, with all its thoroughness, are there no measurements?—R.A.

The Falcons of the World. — Tom J. Cade. Paintings by R. David Digby. Cornell University Press. Ithaca, New York. 1982. 192 pp. \$38.50 hardbound. One is tempted to stand and cheer after reading Cade's first-rate reference on the world's 39 species of *Falco*. It is equally formidable in intellectual and aesthetic endeavor. Approximately the first 55 pages are devoted to the biology of falcons and includes detailed discussion on classification, distribution, migration, feeding adaptation, size, flying performance, hunting success, reverse sexual dimorphism, social behavior, reproduction and a (too-long and labored) justification of the present practice of falconry. (This apologia is the sole blemish in an otherwise immaculate treatise.) The second section engages our attention with a detailed species description of each of the 39 members of the family, each accompanied by a beautiful full-page color portrait by R.D. Digby. The species accounts run from one (for 15 species) to nine (one species) pages, with the Peregrine Fal-

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A field guide to the birds of Taiwan. — James Wan-fu Chang, Ill. color plates and drawings by Pau-Hse Lin and Yu-Hsio Huang. The Envir. Research Center of Tunghai Univ. 1981. 336 pp. \$38. clothbound, boxed. A fully illustrated field guide to a country as frequently visited as Taiwan is somewhat of an event, and this one will be welcomed not only for its usefulness in Taiwan but in mainland China as well. Descriptions and color illustrations, and often maps showing ranges and migration for 390 species are provided. The body of the text is in Chinese, but the species name and distributional status are repeated in English. Unfortunately the color plates are extremely variable in the quality of their drawing, and the colors range from exaggerated to wildly imaginative. Inserted in our copy is a miniature primer on birdwatching and guide to birding in Taiwan, with maps. Available from IR Publications, Ltd. 461 Park Ave. S., Suite 903, New York 10016.—R.A.

A Guide to Bird Finding in Vermont. — Walter G. Ellison. Illustrations and maps by Nancy L. Martin. Vermont Institute of Natural Science. Woodstock, VT. 1981. 134 pp. \$7.45 (incl. postage and handling) paperbound. At last Vermont has its first bird-finding guide and it is serviceable, straightforward, and largely successful. The 23 major birding areas in the state are covered with the help of 21 small area maps, and following those sites there are descriptions of and directions to seven of the state's most productive hawkwatching sites. Because of the subject, this little book may find only a limited audi-

ence but it should by no means be considered useful only for the residents of Vermont. All birders traveling in the state will find this an ultimately practical volume.—S.R.D.

Gulls, a guide to identification. — P.J. Grant. Buteo Books, Vermillion, S.D. 1982. 280 pp., Ill., drawings by the author, plus 375 photographs. \$32.50. This is a greatly revised collection of the articles by Peter Grant published in *British Birds*, elucidating the field identification, in every plumage except downy young, of 23 species of northern hemisphere gulls, all but 8 of which occur or have occurred in North America. Since gull identification is not only difficult, but of great interest to bird-watchers, and since Grant is an acknowledged expert in the art, and since this book is so exceedingly well done, it is the year's major new field guide. The 23 species are divided into five groups of related or similar species; each species is considered under the broad category of identification, followed by an "ageing summary" that gives in abbreviated form the chief differences between plumages, followed by detailed discussion of each of these "plumages" from head to toes. A range map accompanies each species treatment, as well as standing and in-flight sketches. Finally, a wealth of good photographs supplements the text. As a random example, there are 22 devoted to the Black-headed Gull. Our only criticisms are that we find the stipple-technique drawings more difficult to "read" than wash drawings might have been, that some of the range maps are inaccurate, particu-

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larly for the southern Atlantic and Gulf coasts of the U.S., and that a consideration of hybrid plumages would have been an added bonus. Nonetheless, this is a field guide that every serious bird-watcher must have. As the British might say, a super job of work.—R.A.

The Role of Insectivorous Birds in Forest Ecosystems. — J.G. Dickson, R.N. Connor, R.R. Fleet, J.A. Jackson, and J.C. Kroll (eds.). Academic Press. New York, San Francisco. 1979. 381 pp. \$34 hardbound. This edition is a compilation of 19 papers of 24 authors (plus an overview and concluding remarks) presented at a symposium with the same title as the volume, in Nacogdoches, Texas July 13-14, 1978. The papers investigate the enormous variability in the direct and indirect effects birds have in controlling insect populations. There are further papers on bird censusing techniques, prey availability and action, determination of the prey base, association of bird species with specific plant communities or plant structural components, bird utilization (primarily foraging) of various forest habitats, and, in general, the dynamics of the forest ecosystems to which birds and insects belong. Summarily the papers appear to reaffirm the previously stated theory that rather than breaking down high insect infestations, birds function more in preventing such plagues. Under conditions of low insect density, birds serve to diminish numbers more significantly than in areas of very high infestation. In other words, birds act primarily to stabilize the forest ecosystem of which they are a part. These results are extremely important in establishing management programs that do not overmanage for one or a few species at the risk of excluding others. In total interesting and valuable papers, but rather specialized.—S.R.D.

Waterfowl of the Chesapeake Bay Country. — Brooke Meanley. Drawings by John W. Taylor. Tidewater Publishers, Centreville, MD 1982. 210 pp. \$19.95 hardbound. This book is designed for a broad and varied audience. Meanley writes with a lively narrative quality and the book is comprehensive and authoritative. It discusses the origins, distributions, ecology, and populations of waterfowl in the Chesapeake Bay. Interspersed throughout the text are more than 100 photographs, and the 14 drawings of Taylor, commissioned especially for this book, add significantly to its visual appeal. One of the main virtues of this book is that it updates and consolidates much of what has appeared as separate papers and technical publications over the past 20± years. It is basically non-technical and so can be easily read by ornithologists and the layman alike. Recommended.—S.R.D.

Recordings

Sounds of Purple Martins. — Recorded and narrated by J.W. Hardy. ARA-8. 1982. 2-sides 33 rpm 12" disc. Original cover painting by Robert M. Mengel. \$9 from ARA Records, 1615 N.W. 14th Ave., Gainesville, FL 32611. A different sort of record from ARA, which has given us marvelous collections of the songs of wrens, "night-birds," vireos, etc. This one is almost pure "presence" music: you are there beside an active martin house for almost an hour, and if you love the sound of martins, or crave the feeling of spring the sound evokes, this record will bring it to you. Brief introductory remarks and a lesson in "martinese" by Hardy enlivens the program, and Hardy's informal and very personal cover notes

painlessly conceal a lot of martin lore. The cover painting is available as a print. \$10. A final bemused note: the disc label has an iridescent purple hue!—R.A.


A Day in Algonquin Park, Sounds of Nature Volume 2. — William W.H. Gunn. Federation of Ontario Naturalists, Don Mills, Ont., in U.S.A. Houghton Mifflin, Boston. 2 sides, 33 rpm 12" disc. \$8.95. Morning, afternoon and evening in Algonquin Park on a disc, another highly evocative "you are there" half hour of natural sounds. The cover notes lead you on a walk through the forest and marsh, and canoeing on the lake, and everywhere squirrels are scolding, bullfrogs booming, mosquitos whining, and crickets chirping, as well as several dozen species of birds in song, from Common Loon to White-throated Sparrow. Close your eyes and you are there; better than one of our "Site Guides" for luring you to the northwoods.—R.A.

Reviews for this issue by: Robert Arbib, Susan Roney Drennan, Roger L. Saltman, DVM.

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