

**Flight of the Storm Petrel.** Ronald M. Lockley. 1983. David and Charles, London & Paul S. Eriksson, Middlesex, Vermont. 192 pp. \$16.95.

R. M. Lockley's 1942 monograph on Manx's Shearwater is a long recognized classic in scientific nature writing, i.e. an in-depth natural history study written in narrative style. His present book on the Storm Petrel, *Hydrobates pelagicus*, and other members of the storm-petrel family, follows both the style and thoroughness of the earlier work. The book is based primarily on Lockley's long-term studies from 1927 to the present on the island of Skokholm, Wales, supplemented by information from the literature and visits to nesting areas of other petrels.

The first seven chapters detail the life history of the British species on Skokholm and elsewhere. Although written in narrative style, Lockley's statements are based on large sample sizes and his lapses into anthropomorphisms and speculations are clearly differentiated from facts and experiences. Details of pair fidelity, nest-site fidelity, times spent at sea, share of incubation by each sex, incubation period, fledgling period, time (year) of first nesting, and short-distance and migratory movements are all based on banding studies, probably the first on this family of birds. The lack of quantitative data will inevitably lessen the scientific value of the book, but this authoritative work will nevertheless remain the definitive treatise on this species for decades.

The thorough nature of the chapters on *H. pelagicus* makes the book well worth its price without further embellishment, but 4 additional chapters add a summary of current knowledge (or lack thereof) of all the other storm-petrels, based partly on the literature, and partly on Lockley's quests for these birds in Ireland, Iceland, New Zealand, Portugal, Antarctica, Alaska, and the Galapagos. As with the earlier chapters, these are written in narrative, non-quantitative but authoritative style. Two appendices (one a list, with ranges of the 21 species, including 3 not covered in the text; the other on predators and parasites), a brief "bibliography," and an index complete the book.

Lockley's writing is delightful and obviously based on a mixture of familiarity and enthusiasm for his subject. The text is enhanced by sketches of petrels and other creatures by Noel W. Cusa, and by distributional maps of each species. I found only one obvious typing error, and one reference (Turner 1980) cited in the text, but not listed in the "bibliography," plus a few minor discrepancies between literature citations in the text and those in the literature list. There is much of direct interest to banders in "Flight of the Storm Petrel," and even more of general interest to field ornithologists. Quantitative

biologists will be frustrated at the lack of tables and graphs indicating sample sizes and ranges, but any biologist whose first love is field work will find this a fascinating and inspiring read and useful reference source.

Apart from one reference to a "ring" on a bird, and the use of netting to solve an identification dispute (Spectacled vs. Subalpine Warbler), there is no mention of banding, and banders will be most interested in descriptions or mentions of leucistic Herring Gull and House Sparrow, melanistic Grey Heron and partial albino Winter Wren.

I found the book a welcome diversion on a long bus ride, and no doubt ardent "twitchers" in Britain and elsewhere will enjoy parts of it as a casual read, but even they will hesitate at the price and more likely invest it in a good field guide, bird-finding guide or bird atlas.

**Moult in Birds** H. B. Ginn and D. S. Melville 1983, British Trust for Ornithology Guide #19. Tring, England. Available from the BTO or Buteo Books.

The BTO's latest guide is intended to introduce ringers (banders) to the subject of molt ("moult" in Great Britain). Since the generalities of the subject are the same worldwide, the material in the introduction covering plumage and feathers, molt and the annual cycle and the sequence and duration of molt is applicable to North American birds. The BTO Molt Card which is discussed is similar to banding record sheets with the first 42 spaces used for basic information on the bird and its date and place of capture. Most of the remaining spaces are used to score the primaries, secondaries, tertials and rectrices on a 0-5 scale. There is space to enter additional information about body feathers.

Molt accounts for several hundred species of European birds appear in the second part of the volume. Since a number of these species also occur in North America, some accounts are directly applicable, while others are indirectly so, discussing members of genera and families found in North America.

The third section contains 719 references about molt from the literature.

Although *Moult in Birds* was written for a British audience, it is a most useful introduction to the subject for banders elsewhere. I hope it will inspire all of us to gather more information on molt, an area in which banders are in a unique position to contribute to ornithological knowledge.

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