

# Books

**Arizona Game Birds.** David E. Brown. 1989. University of Arizona Press, Tucson. xiv + 307 pp. \$19.95 cloth.

Like David Brown's earlier book on waterfowl and wetlands in Arizona, reviewed by Ronald A. Ryder in *North American Bird Bander* 12:21, 1987, this volume is both comprehensive and highly readable. The "game" in the title does not include most migratory game birds (i.e., waterfowl), but does include more than upland game birds, with chapters on Sandhill Crane and three species of doves and pigeons. The first of the book's thirteen chapters is a general introduction on taxonomy and nomenclature, identification, and numerous aspects of wildlife management in Arizona, including management history. Of particular interest to banders in this chapter are the sections on age/sex determination and on trapping and banding as a management tool. The remaining 12 chapters consist of individual species accounts, grouped into six "parts" according to family or sub-family, with a one (usually) to three (grouse) page introduction to each part. Each chapter is divided into a number of sections, generally consisting of a general introduction, distribution, life history, management history, population dynamics, and an anecdote or general essay based on experiences of the author. In some chapters some of these topics are lumped, while in others additional sections have been added. A highly localized introduced population of California Quail is treated in a brief section appended to the chapter on Gambel's Quail. Although emphasis is on Arizona data, the author cites studies from throughout the range of the species concerned when relevant.

Arizona Game Birds contains considerable material of interest to banders. In addition to the sections on trapping and age/sex determination in the introduction, mentioned above, details on age/sex determination are given for several species and illustrated with photographs for some (e.g., Wild Turkey, Mearns' race of Montezuma Quail, White-winged Dove). A drawing also illustrates the profiles of two races of Sandhill Crane. Banding recovery rates are cited as contributing to the setting of hunting regulations for several species, in assessing the success of releases of Blue Grouse, and in determining reproductive and survival rates of Ring-necked Pheasant. Banding has also revealed that Band-tailed Pigeons may summer in Arizona one year, Mexico the next, shown shifts among areas by cranes, and indicated that genetic interchange between wintering and summering populations of doves in Arizona is probably very low.

With a few exceptions, this book is relatively free of technical, grammatical and proof-reading errors. While

most partridges are sexually monomorphic as stated, this is not true of the briefly mentioned Gray Partridge, not part of Arizona's introduced avifauna. "Dispersal" is obviously intended in the author's statement (p. 154), "although mass dispersions take place," as dispersion is not a process but the result of the processes of dispersal, territorial interactions and other behavior patterns. I was surprised to read (p. 67) that few Blue Grouse "hold to a point," as many do on Vancouver Island, but this behavior varies considerably among individuals and, presumably, populations and perhaps races. The author's treatment of turkeys as a full family differs from current (since 1983) North American taxonomic practice. His use of the names Mearns' Quail and Merriman's Wild Turkey is in reference to races found in Arizona. The editors failed to correct the use of the singular after "data" (p. 15) and missed the redundancies "oftentimes" (pp. 68, 248) and "present time" (p. 180). The use of a hyphen coupled with "between" (pp. 131 and 150) also slipped through, as "and" was obviously intended, not "to" as implied by the hyphen. Although the text is not quite free of proof-reading errors, most such errors are in the literature list or discrepancies between the text and the literature listed. Most significant are four missing references: Emlen and Glading 1945; Gosper 1949a; Gosper 1949b; and Shaw and Jeff 1959.

David Brown's game book is a well-referenced introduction to the biology, distribution and management history of the species of upland game birds, cranes and doves/pigeons which occur in Arizona. The literature list, index and generous use of tables, graphs and other illustrations all add to the usefulness of this book to banders, biologists, wildlife managers and historians of both animal distribution and wildlife management practices. The anecdotes or essays at the end of each chapter show the author to be a perceptive field man who knows the species about which he writes. The relaxed style of these sections will appeal to a more general audience of hunter-naturalist than those more interested in the more thorough treatment earlier in the chapter. The author succeeds in both styles of writing and many readers will appreciate both; but readers who may be offended by his obvious enjoyment of hunting may wish that he had reserved most of these anecdotes for another venue. Aside from these reservations, the author and publisher deserve congratulations on the production of another fine addition to Arizona's ornithological literature.

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## Books *continued*

**Birds of the Canadian Rockies.** George W. Scotter, Tom J. Ulrich, and Edgar T. Jones. 1990. Western Producer Prairie Books, Saskatoon. xvi + 170 pp. \$22.95 Can., paperback.

This introduction to birds of regular occurrence in the Canadian Rockies, straddling the Alberta-British Columbia border, is a showcase of delightful photographs by Ulrich, Jones and others. The book consists of a brief introduction on the purposes of the book and general information (including three good maps) on the Canadian portion of the Rocky Mountains, species accounts, a glossary and topographic illustration, a checklist organized by major regions (mostly parks) in the area, a list of selected references, and indices of "common" (i.e., English) and scientific names. The bulk of the book consists of species accounts of one paragraph per species, organized as two or three per page, each facing one to two photograph(s) of the species.

Although the introduction suggests that the book is intended as a guide for beginners, the authors admit that the photographs are not entirely adequate for a field guide and urge the reader to use this book with a proper field guide. The text certainly omits many of the details that would be required of a field guide (for example, the brown iris of younger Red-eyed Vireos is not mentioned), and some of the distinguishing features mentioned are rather outdated (e.g., Cooper's vs. Sharp-shinned Hawks and the two redpoll species). The text is generally written well, with few inaccuracies, apart from a few slightly misleading statements and anthropomorphic interpretations (e.g., Clark's Nutcracker doesn't just "look and act" like a crow--taxonomically it is one and several structures or behaviors are said to be "for" some purpose or other). Proof-reading lapses are also few; I noticed only two of significance (flavipc for flavipes on p. 54 and Stellar's Jay in the checklist, spelled correctly as Steller's in the text). Canadian readers will be mildly irritated by the use of U.S. spelling in a Canadian-published book.

As banding is not mentioned in this book and bands are not evident in the photographs, its specific interest to banders will be to note the superb photographic skills of veteran bander, Edgar T. Jones. Overall, this is a worthwhile introduction to the birds of a fascinating area, though neither a thorough field guide nor a comprehensive avifaunal work.

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## Recent Literature

### Banding History and Biographies

**Migratory insights through banding.** Part one. R. Kochenberger. 1983. *Newsletter of the Hawk Migration Assoc. of North Amer.* 8(2):39-40. -Cape May Bird Observ., Box 3, Cape May Point, NJ. 08212 -(Brief history and summary of value of banding in migration studies.) MKM

### Banding Equipment and Techniques

**The use of banding recovery data to estimate dispersal rates and gene flow in avian species: case studies in the Red-winged Blackbird and Common Grackle.** W.S. Moore and R.A. Dolbeer. 1989. *Condor* 91:242-253. -Denver Wildl. Res. Center, USDA, 6100 Columbus Ave., Sandusky, OH 44870 -(Title describes contents.) RCT

**Avian laparoscopy as a field technique for sexing birds and an assessment of its effects on wild birds.** H. Richner. 1989. *J. Field Ornithol.* 60:137-142. -Institute de Zoologie et d'Ecol. animale, Univ. de Lausanne, Lausanne, Switzerland -(The technique is faster and less harmful than laparotomy, but the apparatus costs about \$2500 U.S.) RCT

**An improved waterfowl enclosure: considering animal welfare as a research priority.** D.S. Davis and H.A. Allen, Jr. 1989. *J. Field Ornithol.* 60:162-167. -Chesapeake Wildl. Heritage, Box 1745, Easton, MD 21601 -(An enclosure with opaque sides reduces stress and injury to the birds.) RCT

**Solar radio transmitters on Snail Kites in Florida.** N.F.R. Snyder, S.R. Beissinger and M.R. Fuller. 1989. *J. Field Ornithol.* 60:171-177. -USFWS Patuxent Wildl. Res. Center, Laurel, MD 20708 -(Intact back-pack transmitters were seen on birds up to 47 months after attachment.) RCT

**Toenail-clipping: a simple technique for marking individual nidicolous chicks.** V.L. St. Louis, J.C. Barlow and J.-P.R.A. Sweerts. 1989. *J. Field Ornithol.* 60:211-215. -Dept. Ornithol., Roy. Ont. Mus., Toronto, Ont. M5S 2C6 -(Tree Swallows and House Wrens were clipped within 3 days of hatching.) RCT

**Tenured ringing sites.** S.E. Piper. 1988. *Safring News* 17:41-42. -Dept. Survey & Mapping, Univ. Natal, King George V Ave., Durban, South Africa 4001 -(An editorial on the advantages of long-term banding sites in southern Africa, but mostly applicable anywhere.) MKM