

BOOK REVIEWS—RESEÑAS DE LIBROS—RESENHAS DE LIVROS

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(To whom books for review should be sent)

Birds of the Beagle Channel. Aves del Canal Beagle: A Photographic Identification Guide.— Enrique Couve & Claudio Vidal Ojeda. 2000. Fántastico Sur Birding Ltda., Punta Arenas, Chile. 265 pp., numerous color illustrations, indexes of English, scientific, and Spanish (Chilean and Argentine) names. ISBN 956-8007-01-6. Soft cover. Available from Fántastico Sur Birding Ltda., Magallanes 960, 2nd Floor, P.O. Box 455, Punta Arenas, Chile. *E-mail:* birding@chileaustral.com. No price given.

Published only a year after the authors' own "Where to Watch Birds in Torres del Paine National Park, Chile: An Identification Guide" (reviewed in *Ornitol. Neotrop.* 11: 277–279, 2000), the present volume deals with the "Birds of the Beagle Channel, Cape Horn, Staten Island, Diego Ramírez Islands and Surrounding Seas." In many ways, the format of "Birds of the Beagle Canal" is similar to that of Couve and Vidal's field guide to the birds of the Torres del Paine National Park, but the area it covers is more southern, as it "comprises the southern coast of Isla Grande de Tierra del Fuego (Chile-Argentina), Beagle Channel (Chile-Argentina) and southern islands (Chile), Wollaston Islands near Cape Horn and Diego Ramírez Islands (Chile). Also Staten Island on the eastern tip of Tierra del Fuego, and Noir Island and surroundings isles of Cockburn Passage to the west" (Introduction, pp. 10–11). Of the 153 species considered by Couve and Vidal to occur in this area, 96 are described in detail

and illustrated with color photographs. The remaining 58 species are listed in Addendum I (pp. 224–230: Resident, Regular and Frequent Species), Addendum II (pp. 225–230: Rare, Occasional and Accidental Species), and Addendum III (p. 239: Introduced Species). After introductory pages that include an explanation of occurrence symbols, the topography of the bill of a tubenose, the topography of a bird and of a wing, and how birds are measured and types of tail, several maps (pp. 22–27) show the position of the area within South America, a general map and several more detailed maps of the Cape Horn (or Wollaston, unfortunately misspelled "Wollanston") Archipelago, Staten Island (Isla de los Estados), the Diego Ramírez Islands, the trio of Picton, Nueva and Lennox Islands, and Noir Island. Pages 28–31 comprise eight color photographs of spectacular southern South American landscapes (Stokes Glacier in Tierra del Fuego, Elephant Seals lounging on a beach near Marinelli Glacier, a view of a Fuegian canal, glacially eroded rocks, two photos of mixed flock of southern seabirds, several birds associated with seal colonies, and a subantarctic *Poa flabellata* grassland). The species accounts of the 96 species treated in detail occupy pages 32–223; they are listed in a traditional sequence from *Rollandia rolland* to *Carduelis barbata*. Each species is treated on two facing pages, with the text on the left page and at the bottom of the right page, and one (and sometimes two) color photographs at the top of the right page. All photographs

but three are signed by Couve. One species, *Pelecanoides magellani*, is illustrated by a color painting. The text is printed on two columns, with English on the left and Spanish on the right. Information is given on plumage, status, habitat, and behavior. On the whole, the illustrations are adequate for the identification of most species, but for some (e.g., *Diomedea melanophris* and *Diomedea chrysostoma*, immature plumage of *Geranoaetus melanoleucus*), the iconography is not sufficient. I had already pointed out the lack of an illustration of the immature of *Geranoaetus melanoleucus* in my review of Couve and Vidal's guide to the birds of the Torres del Paine National Park. I have strong doubts about the accuracy of some statements (for example that *Phrygilus gayi* is "Resident in the south of Tierra del Fuego, southern islands of the Beagle Channel and Staten Island," p. 218). The scientific name of *Melanodera xanthogramma* (p. 220) is misspelled *xantogramma*. A short bibliography (pp. 240–242), a table listing all 153 species (pp. 255–262), and a foreword by Charif Tala from the Unión de Ornítólogos de Chile (UNORCH)

complete the volume, which is dedicated to the memory of Percival W. Reynolds (a former resident of Tierra del Fuego who did pioneering ornithological work there) and Gerry S. Clark (a New Zealand ornithologist who cruised the remote southern Chilean archipelagos). This compact little guide should be useful to travellers and birders who visit the remote and beautiful southernmost reaches of the South American continent. The bilingual text is a definite plus in this regard. Unfortunately, although the two authors of this book, and of its predecessor on the birds of Torres del Paine, are excellent field ornithologists, they seem to have produced these two volumes rather too rapidly, and not to have taken the time to have their facts carefully checked before publication by one or more authorities on the birds of these fascinating areas. I will consequently end this review as I did the review of their previous book by stating that it is a good addition to the literature of the region but that "I look forward to a new and improved second edition."—François Vuilleumier.