

ORNITHOLOGICAL LITERATURE

CURRENT ORNITHOLOGY. Volume 10. Edited by Dennis M. Power. Plenum Press, New York. 1993: xiv + 383 pp. \$85.00 (cloth).—This review series has now spanned a decade, a tribute to the importance of the service it provides. The present volume deals with subjects as diverse as “trophic structure of raptor communities: a three-continent comparison and synthesis” and “evolution of avian ontogenies.”

The first paper in the volume, “The role of phylogenetic history in the evolution of contemporary avian mating and parental care systems,” by J. D. Ligon, is a rich, imaginative review of mating systems. I intend to assign it as required reading to bird students, once they have sufficient taxonomic background to follow the phylogeny.

“Trophic structure of raptor communities: a three-continent comparison and synthesis,” by C. D. Marti, E. Korpimäki, and F. M. Jaksic, is unusual in that it is more of an analysis of existing data than a review of existing literature, although the literature review is also extensive, and the paper is a wonderful source of citations and sources for raptor diet data.

“Matrix methods for avian demography,” by D. B. McDonald and H. Caswell, is, at first, daunting to those of us with a phobia for equations and symbols. However, the problem is illusionary. The text, while dealing with complex analyses, is readable and the symbolism clear and easily (even by me) followed. The paper will undoubtedly be useful to students of avian populations, a research area which becomes more important with growth of human populations.

“Nocturnality in colonial waterbirds: occurrence, special adaptations, and suspect benefits,” by R. McNeil, P. Drapeau, and R. Pierotti, amazed me in its content. I simply had no idea that so much work had been done in the field. Reading this chapter led me to add a lot of material on the subject to my class lectures on avian behavior.

“Latitudinal gradients in avian species diversity and the role of long-distance migration,” by K. N. Rabenold, is the shortest chapter in the volume. This may be a result of the existence of previous reviews of materials related to the topic. Understanding evolutionary and ecological control of species diversity has been one of the major thrusts of ornithology over the past three decades. Rabenold’s chapter carries this subject forward significantly without being redundant.

“Evolution of avian ontogenies,” by J. M. Starck, is very different from other chapters in the volume. Profusely illustrated, it covers growth and development from the perspective of histology, embryology, morphology, and ecology. It truly is a synthesis of ornithological ontogeny.

It is obvious that reviews in this series have become much more specialized (and their titles longer) in comparison with earlier issues. (First volume titles such as “Comparative avian demography” and “Bird chromosomes” were typical of earlier volumes.) This, perhaps, is a consequence of the considerable growth and development of information about ornithological subject materials. It has always been my contention that ornithology is first of all a science like all other branches of zoology. It therefore should be expected that knowledge in the field should become more fine-structured, technical, and insightful.

The present volume accomplishes what I expect from a review series. The papers thoroughly review their subject materials, survey the most modern advances, and synthesize the findings in a way that extends our understanding a bit farther.—C. R. BLEM.

THE BIRDS OF CAPE MAY. By David Sibley. New Jersey Audubon Society, Franklin Lakes, New Jersey, 1993: 150 pp. Price not known. (paper).—This guide will be very useful to birders visiting Cape May, and according to the foreword in the book, more than 100,000 birders visit the cape annually. The book essentially is an annotated checklist based mostly on data collected from 1985–1992. Each species that has been recorded at Cape May is given paragraph coverage including habitat preferences, local variation in status, daily maxima, year-to-year fluctuations, historical changes, and other information. The standard bar graphs designating abundances are included. The book was produced entirely by desktop publishing and was printed locally. Hopefully this reduces costs, but the book is attractive, clearly written, and thorough. The book will be available only through New Jersey Audubon Society centers (including the Cape May Bird Observatory, P.O. Box 3, Cape May Point, New Jersey 08212) until late summer 1994, when it will be available to commercial distributors. Get a copy of this manual plus a Cape May County, New Jersey, map and you will be ready to get a full appreciation of one of the most historic birding areas in the eastern United States.—C. R. BLEM.

THE BIRDS OF CITES AND HOW TO IDENTIFY THEM. By Johannes Erritzoe. Illustrated by Helga Boullet Erritzoe and the author. The Lutterworth Press, Cambridge, U.K. 1993: xxii + 198 pp., 75 color plates, 10 black-&-white plates. \$161 (leatherbound), \$51 (hard back), \$44 (ringbound).—The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) has listed 1478 species and subspecies of birds that are of concern. The present volume attempts to provide a guide to the identification of these species for the use of all those who might have to deal with the provisions of the Convention (i.e., importers, aviculturists, customs officials). It describes and illustrates in color 406 of these species. Included are all those on CITES List I, II, and III except for those “look-alike” species (e.g., 269 birds of prey) not on List I. The “look-alike” species are listed and a black-and-white figure is given for each genus.

The text for each species is minimal and gives the name in English, German, French, and often Spanish or Portuguese; a brief statement of range; details of description, a terse statement of Status, including population estimates for List I species, and several literature references. The introduction supplies an illustrated guide to the bird families. An appendix gives the full text of the Convention and a useful glossary giving the French, German, and Spanish translations of the English terms used in the text.

The paintings of the birds are attractive. Although not of world class, they will serve adequately for identification purposes.—GEORGE A. HALL.

DUCKS IN THE WILD. Conserving Waterfowl and their Habitats. By Paul A. Johnsgard. Prentice Hall, New York, New York. 1992: 160 pp., 130 color photographs and illustrations; 20 line drawings; maps. \$30.—After writing of many bird families the prolific Paul Johnsgard has returned to his first love—waterfowl. The result is this attractive volume which is more than the coffee table book the format suggests. As might be expected, Johnsgard writes with skill and feeling and has produced a worthwhile non-technical treatment of the ducks of the world.

The main text is a species by species account of 113 duck species, divided into ten tribes. Each species account is accompanied by an excellent color photograph and a small map of the breeding range. For a few species for which no photographs are available, a painting is

given. Most accounts occupy a full page but some of the less well-known species are given only a half page. These accounts concentrate on life history characteristics, but occasionally discuss such things as a classification, identification marks, and conservation matters.

The leading chapter, "The Magic of Waterfowl" is an eloquent invocation to waterfowl, and a chapter, "Watching Waterfowl," suggests things the reader should observe in the field. A chapter entitled "Extinct and Endangered Ducks" discusses the four species that have become extinct in historical times: Crested Shelduck (*Tadorna cristata*); Labrador Duck (*Camptorhynchus labradorius*); Pink-headed Duck (*Rhodonessa caryophyllacea*); and Auckland Islands Merganser (*Mergus australis*), and gives a list of 14 full species and 11 subspecies that are considered endangered. This chapter also has a long treatment of waterfowl and wetland conservation, particularly in North America. There is an underlying theme of conservation throughout the book.

The book closes with an illustrated identification key to 106 of the species treated, a glossary of terms and a brief selected bibliography.

The book is highly recommended for the general reader interested in waterfowl, and the collection of photographs will be of interest to many ornithologists.—GEORGE A. HALL.