

ethnolinguists as they may be to ornithologists. That great erudition, maybe even genius, has been exercised in their compilation is scarcely to be doubted, though I cannot shake off the impression that they may reflect considerable idiosyncrasy as well.

The second volume also contains various other lists of bird names, including those in ancient languages, words for nests, eggs, and bats, terms used in falconry, and bird names from "overseas franco-phone countries" and Latin America.

There is no index, because this would have added more than 700 pages to the work. The CD-ROM, therefore, is an absolute necessity. If, for example, one encountered an unknown word for some European bird and wanted to know to what species it applied, there would be no practical way to find it without searching the text with a computer. I have little doubt that it would be found, however. Michel Desfayes has presented us with a labor of love of such scope as to leave thoughtful reviewers with a lingering sense of their own deficiencies.—STORRS L. OLSON, *Department of Vertebrate Zoology, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. 20560, USA. E-mail: olson.storrs@nsmnh.si.edu*

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Albatrosses—W. L. N. Tickell. 2000. Pica Press (Helm Information Ltd.), Sussex, United Kingdom. 488 pp., 52 color plates + text figures. ISBN 1-873403-94-1. Cloth \$60.00.—W. L. N. (Lance) Tickell can truly be considered one of the fathers of albatross research. In 1958, he started banding Wandering Albatrosses on Bird Island, South Georgia, and that formed the nucleus of the long-term population study of that species which continues to this day. I still remember the thrill, some 30 years later, of encountering some of the birds Lance had banded as adults when I too was fortunate enough to work on Bird Island (even though those particular birds might have been only about halfway through their remarkable lives!). The book *Albatrosses* represents a superb, and fitting, conclusion to Tickell's more than 30 years of professional involvement with these magnificent birds, and it provides the most comprehensive, comparative account of the albatross family currently available.

The bulk of the book, 10 chapters in all, detail each of the 13 species or sub-species of albatross, organized from a geographical perspective: the southern,

tropical, and northern albatrosses. Each of those sections commences with an overview of the relevant oceans, oceanography, bathymetry, and meteorology. Each chapter is rich in historical and geographical information on the discovery and exploration of the many breeding islands as well as the different species themselves. Every breeding island is dealt with individually, with maps indicating all breeding sites, and tables summarizing breeding populations. All aspects of albatross biology are then covered species by species, including breeding ecology and population dynamics, food, parasites and disease, and predators. Those sections are well illustrated with line drawings and include examples of most of the exciting at-sea distribution and foraging data that have only recently been obtained using remote-sensing and satellite tracking. The species accounts are preceded by a general introduction (Chapters 1 and 2) dealing with issues such as basic anatomy, similarities and differences with the albatrosses' closest relatives, the petrels, and the current controversy over albatross classification. Following the species accounts, Chapters 13–16 review and synthesize aspects of comparative biology (molt, flight, behavior, and ecology), and the text concludes with two chapters on human relations and attitudes towards albatrosses, including a fine collection of albatross poetry. The book also contains a substantial appendix, with a checklist, morphological measurements, egg size, diet, aging criteria, behavior, and population estimates for all breeding locations, together with an extensive bibliography (with references up to and including 1999).

In general, the book is very well produced, and the text is well written and highly readable. The general reader (including nonornithologists) will find much of interest here (and they should not be put off by the opening of the Introductory chapter in which "cladistic," "trinomial," and "mitochondrial cytochrome *b*" appear in rapid succession without explanation or definition!). For me, the highlights of the book included the "Photographic Section" with color photographs of each species (many taken by the author himself), and the line drawings by Robin Prytherch, which superbly and delightfully illustrate many of the albatross' complex courtship behaviors. However, the text is also sufficiently detailed and comprehensive enough to be of great value to the professional biologist (especially for the detailed population data). The book will perhaps be most often visited as a reference text rather than being read cover to cover. *Albatrosses* would make a fine gift for any amateur ornithologist and should be on the book shelf of all seabird biologists.—TONY D. WILLIAMS, *Department of Biological Sciences, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, British Columbia, V5A 1S6, Canada. E-mail: tdwillia@sfu.ca*