



## REVIEWS

### **Bird Identification: a reference guide.**

By Kristian Adolfsson & Stefan Cherrug.

SOF, Lund, 1995. 379 pages. ISBN 91-86572-24-5. Paperback, Europe: 220 SEK (+60 SEK if cheque); rest of World: 240 SEK (+60 SEK if cheque).

The standard researcher's tool—*Zoological Record: Section 18: Aves*—is not generally available in the ordinary birdwatcher's personal library, purely for reasons of cost, although it will be accessible in every serious ornithological library. This new reference guide performs the same task for the single subject of bird identification, with the advantage that it covers 20 years of published papers, notes and photographs in a single volume. The 11,800 references, compiled from 66 ornithological journals published in 21 countries, are grouped under species, so, for instance, all the references (to identification) for Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *Calidris acuminata* occupy two pages. Unlike *Zoological Record*, there is no separate listing under author (sensibly, for that would probably have been largely a waste of space for the potential users of this book). Under each species, the references are listed rather strangely, in alphabetical order of the country of the journal concerned, rather than, for instance, by date order, which might have been helpful for anyone wishing to consult only the latest references on the identification of a particular species. Under Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, for instance, this leads to an *Egretta* reference (from Austria) being followed by one from *Aves* (Belgium), one from *Dansk Ornitologisk Forenings Tidsskrift* (Denmark), single references from *Lintumies* and *Ornis*

*Fennica* (both Finland) and then five from *Birding World*, one from *Birds*, two from *Birdwatch*, ten from *British Birds*, one from *Scottish Birds* and two from *Twitching* (all Great Britain), and so on through Norway, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the USA. This system does have the advantage that references in any one particular journal are all grouped together (which can be useful for follow-up information), so may in practice be as convenient as a date-sequence listing. Species are listed in standard Voous order, and there is an index of scientific names and another of English names.

This reference guide should help to ensure that future identification papers are thoroughly researched, and will help the discoverer of any rare bird to find quickly relevant published information to expand upon that given in the field guides. Illustrations are minimal, being confined to a few space-filling (but very pleasing) line-drawings by Peter Elfman, and a beautiful colour painting of Red-necked Stint *C. ruficollis* by Hans Larsson on the cover.

The two compilers of this list of identification references have performed a very useful service for European bird-identifiers, and this volume deserves to find its way on to the bookshelves of most individual birders.

J. T. R. Sharrock

### **Birds and Climate Change.**

By John F. Burton.

Christopher Helm, London, 1995. 376 pages; 11 black-and-white plates; 25 line-drawings; 34 figs. ISBN 0-7136-4045-6. £24.99.

For John Burton, 'global warming' (human-induced global climate change) is not a hypothetical possibility. If it has not already commenced, it is imminent. I agree, although there are other significant features of the present book with which I take issue. It is not, incidentally, primarily about global warming. Rather, it reviews the history of Europe's birds from the last Ice Age to the present day, focusing on events since the nineteenth century. The possible conse-

quences of global climate change are then set in this context. Mixed throughout the text are occasional references to other taxa (insects and mammals in particular), and to other continents (North America), but in a rather unsystematic and bitty way.

As a source of reference, it is valuable. For example, chapters 6-10 are chiefly concerned with detailed accounts of over 200 species of birds which spread north and west across Europe in the climatic ameliora-

tion of 1850-1950. Here, and in numerous appendices, Burton brings together a wealth of otherwise scattered, and difficult-to-obtain information. The sheer scale of the changes that have taken place in Europe's avifauna on a time scale of a few hundred years is staggering.

Unfortunately, the comprehensive and detailed nature of the information does not make for an easy read. Nor is it a book to be studied uncritically. I do not share Burton's unblinking faith that climate accounts for virtually all changes in range; his analyses lack statistical rigour and a proper evaluation

of alternatives, not least habitat modification. The biggest omission is its failure to suggest possible mechanisms, except for occasional references to food supply.

Anybody interested in large-scale past, and likely future, changes in the distribution and abundance of bird species should read this book. So should conservation biologists, struggling to uphold the myth of 'natural distributions'. But take its main message—that climate is *the* primary determinant of species' distributions—as a bold hypothesis and a source of ideas, not as established fact.  
*John H. Lawton*

### The Marsh Harrier.

By Roger Clarke.

Hamlyn, London, 1995. 126 pages; 19 colour plates; 26 line-drawings. ISBN 0-600-58301-5. Paperback £12.99.

Most monographs are based on the author's own observations, supplemented by, and compared with, those of other workers. This book, as the introduction tells us, is not based on personal study, but is a general review. Clarke has combed the literature and produced a good general account of the ecology of the Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*, including history, distribution, breeding biology, behaviour and a final chapter on threats and conservation.

At times, it appears that published sources have been quoted rather uncritically, and, as these make up a high proportion of the

material used, it is a pity that full references are not given in the bibliography. Some of the most up-to-date references are from a harrier conference held in 1993 (Clarke is the *Proceedings* editor), but these papers have not yet been published.

Generally, this is a comprehensive and readable account, although more emphasis on the special features of the species (e.g. polygyny, large clutch size, recent adaptation to crop-nesting in Britain) would have added greater depth and interest. It is, however, a useful addition to the series.

*John Underhill-Day*

### New World Warblers.

By Jon Curson. Illustrated by David Quinn & David Beadle.

Christopher Helm, London, 1994. 252 pages; 36 colour plates; 117 distribution maps. ISBN 0-7136-3932-6. £24.99.

To many, the New World warblers (Parulidae) form a particularly stunning group of species, which in spring plumage are difficult to beat. Anyone who has been to the New World to see these birds on spring migration will know that the number of birdwatchers who gather to see these birds is testimony to the group's popularity.

This recent addition to the Christopher Helm Identification Guides follows the series' familiar format. The introductory chapters cover taxonomy, evolution, dimorphism, breeding behaviour and conservation, all in some detail. In addition, there is useful discussion on superspecies, the Yellow Warbler *Dendroica petechia* complex and hybridisation.

The individual species accounts are reviewed under Identification, Description, Geographical Variation, Voice, Habitat and habits, Status, Distribution, Movements, Moults, Measurements and References. The texts appear to be both accurate and concise, and pull together much useful information not readily available in any other single-volume publication. They usefully include biometric data and black-and-white drawings of relevant tail shapes and patterns, which will be of particular interest to ringers. The differences in moult terminology used in North America and in Europe are explained, which is helpful and will be useful for the international marketing of the book.

There are very few errors. The only one

likely to cause much confusion is on page 58, opposite plate 19, where the captions are transposed for the two races of Belding's Yellowthroat *Geothlypis beldingi*: the text for 55a should be exchanged with that of 55c. The only minor shortfall concerns the song descriptions, which are sometimes hard to understand. Songs are always difficult to translate to the reader and there are few, if any, books which have achieved this adequately.

The 116 species of North American and Neotropical wood-warblers appear on 36 colour plates. Several age-related plumages are depicted whenever relevant, as well as the normal seasonal plumage variations.

The two artists, David Beadle and David Quinn, are to be congratulated on their fine

artwork. Few of the species illustrated have lost their visual impact from the field to the plate, and my own favourite, the Prothonotary Warbler *Protonotaria citrea*, has lost none of its appeal.

The book has been well planned and the plates reproduced to a very high standard. Its size also allows it to be used, to some degree, in the field, but much of its value will be as a source of reference, or just simply to study the plates. I can thoroughly recommend it to all, particularly those with an interest in this group of birds, whether resident in or frequent visitor to North, Central or South America, or who search for potential vagrants in southwest Britain or Ireland during the autumn.

*Séan McMinn*

### Important Bird Areas in the Middle East.

Compiled by M. I. Evans.

BirdLife International, Cambridge, 1994. 410 pages. ISBN 0-946888-28-0. Paperback £24.75.

Many Middle Eastern countries are popular destinations for birdwatchers, owing, no doubt, to their wide range of habitats (not just deserts!) that harbour a wealth of birds, including many endangered species. Conservation in a few of these countries is well developed, but in others much remains to be done. For the first time, this welcome volume lists all of the important bird sites in the region and describes them in detail so that planners and politicians cannot claim to be unaware of which areas merit special protection.

This book does not include Turkey (which was included in *Important Bird Areas in Europe* by Grimmett & Jones) or Egypt (and thus excludes the Sinai), though it does extend as far east as Afghanistan, and includes all of the southern Arabian countries.

After some interesting chapters on measures for site conservation, site selection, data presentation and an overview and recommendations, the bulk of this book is taken up with

the site accounts, each of which includes a detailed site description, a list of birds for which the site is important (sometimes with a status summary and sometimes with peak counts), notes on other threatened wildlife, a piece on conservation issues and, when relevant, a reference to further reading. Maps of each country show the location of the sites, but there is none for any of the individual sites.

Throughout the text, only scientific names are used for birds. English names are given in an appendix, but anyone unfamiliar with the scientific names of Middle Eastern birds will frequently need to refer to the back of the book.

This compilation was a joint project with the Ornithological Society of the Middle East, and was supported by the IWRB and the RSPB. We now only have to hope that those in authority in the relevant countries take note and help to conserve these important sites.

*David Fisher*

### Ruffled Feathers and Worse: an outline of the legal measures for the protection of birds in the United Kingdom.

By James Fitzgerald & Nick Carter.

BTO/Simmons & Simmons, Thetford & London, 1995. 71 pages; 16 colour plates. £4.95.

The first impression is of an A4-sized internal report, not a document for external distribution. The only concession to an outside market is 16 small colour photographs, which have not succeeded. In his Foreword, Jeremy Greenwood states 'there

is now a plethora of legislation aimed at wildlife protection' and this volume brings it all under one cover. Approximately half of the contents consists of tables of habitats, species schedules and details of appendices to various conventions, several in a some-

what simplified form. Unfortunately, schedules regularly get amended or updated and there can be no guarantee that the information will be 100% accurate a short time after publication.

This is clearly intended to be functional,

and it has the look of a solicitors' document (the influence of Simmons & Simmons). For those working in this field, it will be useful; for the average birder or BTO member, probably not.

Bob Scott

## Photographic Field Guide: Birds of Australia.

By Jim Flegg, with Steve Madge.

New Holland, London, 1994. 367 pages. Hardback ISBN 1-85368-353-1. £19.99. 1995 Paperback ISBN 1-85368-398-1. £14.99.

This comprehensive and excellent collection of photographs of Australian birds is presented as a field guide, with short texts opposite each page of photographs, along with a distribution map for each species. Photographic field guides of this kind inevitably suffer in comparison with those using painted illustrations, since only one or two photographs of each species are usually included: insufficient to illustrate all of the various plumages. Used to supplement a normal field guide, however, they are of great benefit, and that is primarily the use to which this book should be put. Anyone visiting Australia should certainly take a copy, along with a field guide of their choice.

The quality of the photographs is excellent and in the 1995 paperback edition all of the birds are correctly captioned (unlike many photographic books). In the 1994 hardback edition, however, the photograph captioned Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus* shows a Wood Sandpiper *T. glareola*; and the photographs of whistlers *Pachycephala* have been

muddled up completely, presumably at a fairly late stage in the editing: the bird captioned as a male Gilbert's Whistler *P. inornata* is a male Black-tailed (Mangrove Golden) Whistler *P. melanura*, the bird captioned as a male Mangrove Golden Whistler is a Grey-headed Whistler *P. griseiceps*, the bird captioned as a male 'Grey Whistler *P. simplex*' (= Grey-headed Whistler) is a male Rufous Whistler *P. rufiventris*, and the bird captioned as a male Rufous Whistler is a male Gilbert's Whistler. The 1995 edition corrects these errors and also includes revisions and additions to the text by Steve Madge. Anyone owning the first edition may wish to amend their copy.

It would have been useful if the date and place where each photograph was taken had been given, since this helps to clarify the plumage the bird is in and which race is involved. Nevertheless, this book makes a very nice, portable collection of photographs of Australian birds and is recommended.

David Fisher

## Birds in Bahrain: a study of their migration patterns 1990-92.

By Erik Hirschfeld. Line-drawings by Hans Larsson.

Hobby Publications, Dubai, 1995. 124 pages; 27 line-drawings. ISBN 1-872839-03-7. Paperback £8.00.

This is my sort of book. The author has treated his personal observations in Bahrain as if he were a one-man moving bird observatory. By standardising watching areas and times of observations, and then analysing records by ten-day periods and plotting them as graphs using sliding three × ten-day averages, he indicates the relative likelihood of seeing each species at different times of year. For the rarer species, histograms of actual records are given rather than calculated graphs. Thus, the most interesting information relates to the commonest migrants, which

could so easily have been almost ignored if observations, recording and analysis had not been well organised. All species which were, in the author's opinion, reliably recorded in the country during 1990-92 are included.

The transposition of two pages is noted by an erratum slip, and there is a scattering of probably unimportant printer's errors and the occasional ambiguity (e.g. does '2-300 birds' mean two to 300 or does it mean 200 to 300?).

This book follows hot on the heels of Tom Nightingale & Mike Hill's *Birds of Bahrain*

(1993; reviewed *Brit. Birds* 87: 282), and anyone with an interest in or visiting the island of Bahrain will doubtless wish to own both books.

As well as documenting observations, Erik Hirschfeld notes that 'trapping of birds is quite widespread in Bahrain, especially in spring when many migrants are conspicuous. The most sought-after species are wheatears [*Oenanthe*] (for eating) and shrikes [*Lanius*] (for their pretty colours).' He notes that at least 500-1,000 Lesser Kestrels *Falco naumanni* are trapped each spring, which 'will have a serious effect on the World population of this vulnerable species unless

something is done immediately to stop it.' Another serious threat is to Sooty Falcons *F. concolor*, owing to a probably well-intentioned but misguided project to stock an artificial breeding programme with eggs and chicks from the remote islands where the species is breeding safely, and introduce these artificially reared birds to mainland Bahrain. One must hope that Erik Hirschfeld's words will draw attention to this potential error of judgment and lead to a proper scientific assessment of the best actions needed to safeguard the Sooty Falcon population.

Meanwhile, buy the book.

J. T. R. Sharrock

### Collins Gem Birdwatching Photoguide.

By Rob Hume. Photographic consultants David & Jean Hosking.

HarperCollins, London, 1995. 240 pages; over 200 photographs. ISBN 0-00-470756-7. Paperback £3.50.

This is a marvellous book, absolutely crammed with spot-on advice for everyone contemplating taking up birdwatching as a hobby. It is not a field guide, but covers just about every other relevant topic. It is, however, the sort of book to which one wishes to refer when at home, planning what to do, so the tiny size (8.2 × 11.7 cm), standard for the 'Gem' series, seems highly inappropriate; there is no need for it to fit into a pocket. This

will, however, fit very well into a Christmas stocking, where it could do a tremendous amount of good . . . This book should be reprinted in a larger version, with very much larger print, for the benefit of the maturer beginner, for whom the small format and excruciatingly tiny print will be a deterrent. The text deserves a wide audience.

J. T. R. Sharrock

### Birds of Glamorgan.

By Clive Hurford & Peter Lansdown.

Hurford & Lansdown, Cardiff, 1995. 228 pages; 30 colour plates; 16 black-and-white plates; 53 line-drawings; 127 distribution maps; 73 histograms. ISBN 1-872808-34-4. £25.00.

When I started birdwatching in Cardiff in the late 1960s, *The Birds of Glamorgan* by Heathcote, Griffin & Salmon was my main source of information. Poring over its pages, I was inspired to learn that Nightingales *Luscinia megarhynchos* and Red-backed Shrikes *Lanius collurio* used to breed on the farm from where I helped with the local milk round, a Little Auk *Alle alle* had been found on the pond near my school, Hawfinches *Coccothraustes coccothraustes* bred in the suburb of Cardiff where I lived and an Ivory Gull *Pagophila eburnea* and many other rarities had been seen on the reservoir only 200 m from my house.

Now, nearly 30 years on, a new *Birds of Glamorgan* has been produced summarising the ornithological data amassed during the

intervening years, including the results of two breeding-bird atlas surveys. The book includes chapters on the history of bird-recording in Glamorgan, a summary of bird-ringing, a geological overview of the county, a description of the principal bird habitats including quite detailed botanical information, and the species accounts themselves.

Interestingly, the authors have chosen to revert to the Watsonian Vice-county system for the definition of the county boundaries, thus excluding parts of Monmouthshire and Breconshire which were treated as part of Glamorgan in the annual bird reports from 1974 to 1992. This results in many records of rarer species, especially from the Rumney Great Wharf area, being relegated to an appendix (including my record of two

Horned Larks *Eremophila alpestris* in 1972, which was the only species that I ever added to the county list). Their reasons for doing so do, however, seem logical.

The other slightly unusual feature of the book concerns the breeding-bird atlas maps, which, rather than using the standard international symbols (dots of different sizes), use solid black circles to show confirmed breeding records, stippled circles for probable breeding, and open circles for possible breeding. These conventions work well and give a clear picture of the atlas results.

The species accounts are well written and summarise the status of each bird succinctly. The book is attractively produced and includes a splendid selection of habitat and bird photographs in both black-and-white and colour. Anyone with an interest in the ornithology of Glamorgan will certainly want to obtain a copy, and I hope that it will inspire future generations of young (and not-so-young) birdwatchers resident in the county in the way that the earlier volume did me.

*David Fisher*

### **Birds and Weather: a birdwatchers' guide.**

By Stephen Moss.

Hamlyn, London, 1995. 174 pages; 28 colour plates; 25 line-drawings; 27 maps. ISBN 0-600 58679-0. £16.99.

One of the thrills of birdwatching is finding the unexpected—from a Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola* in your garden to a Siberian vagrant on an East Coast headland. We all know that the weather plays a major part in what turns up where; but not everybody can read a weather map well enough to predict a big East Coast fall, or to know that conditions are perfect for transatlantic vagrancy. Even fewer birders can explain why American vagrants make it to Europe more often now than 20 years ago. These and many other issues are addressed clearly and simply in this excellent little book. The 11 chapters

provide an introduction to climate, and to birds, weather and folklore, before launching into the influence of climate on migration patterns, vagrancy, seabirds, and birds in winter. The three closing chapters provide one of the best popular accounts of climate change that I have read. The focus throughout is upon Britain and Ireland, and is enlivened by Stephen Moss's palpable excitement as he relives some of the great weather-driven birding dramas of the last few decades.

A book to enjoy, and from which to learn.  
*John H. Lawton*

### **Sjældne Fugle i Danmark: en oversigt over forekomsten af sjældne fugle i Danmark og Nordvesteuropa 1963-1992.**

By Svend Rønne. Illustrated by Niels Knudsen.

Pinus, Skjern, 1994. 393 pages; 177 line-drawings; numerous maps and histograms. ISBN 87-7722-068-4. DKR 345.

This is the Danish equivalent of our *Rare Birds in Britain and Ireland* (Sharrock & Sharrock 1976; updated by Dymond, Fraser & Gantlett 1989). The text is wholly in Danish, although scientific names and English names are given for each bird species. For those not able to read Danish, there is no English-language summary, but the maps and histograms are self-explanatory. The maps of Denmark show numbers of records in each region (by actual numerals rather than symbols) and, where appropriate, there are histograms showing distributions of all the records for 11 mainly northwestern European

countries in addition to Denmark: Iceland, the Faroes, 'England' (= Britain & Ireland), the Netherlands, Germany (former West and former East), Poland, Norway, Sweden, Finland and France. The species texts include mention of relevant identification papers and there are lists of other useful references.

This compilation is considerably enhanced by evocative drawings by Niels Knudsen. Although clearly aimed mainly at Danish readers, it will be a useful source of reference for everyone interested in the rare birds of Western Europe.

*J. T. R. Sharrock*

## Hamlyn Photographic Guide to the Waders of the World.

By David Rosair & David Cottridge.

Hamlyn, London, 1995. 175 pages; 700 colour plates. ISBN 0-600-58475-5. £24.99.

This book is essentially a photographic review of all the World's 212 extant species of Charadrii, including sheathbills (Chionididae) and Plains-wanderer *Pedionomus torquatus*. Accompanying text covers races, range and movements, plumages, habitat and behaviour.

Remarkably, there are photographs for 208 species, omitting only Eskimo Curlew *Numenius borealis*, Imperial Snipe *Gallinago imperialis*, and two of the woodcocks *Scolopax*. For several species, it is likely that these are the first ever to be published, and for Tuamotu Sandpiper *Prosobonia cancellata* and Giant Snipe *G. undulata*, for example, they are certainly the first I have seen. Others, however, are familiar, having been featured already in the pages of this journal for example. The quality of photography and reproduction is superb throughout. No shots are of birds in the hand, while many have clearly been selected to display important aspects of behaviour or identification features. David Cottridge, although himself the most prolific photographic contributor, has trawled extensively for high-quality images. Brief captions identify the species and, where

appropriate, the sex, plumage or race depicted, for which the assistance of BB's own Richard Chandler is acknowledged. Sadly, the authors have included neither date nor place; this would have been of particular value, since clearly marked seasonal changes in appearance are the norm for waders.

David Rosair's informative and well-written text adds insights clearly drawn from his personal field experience of more than 180 of the species. The material and its presentation have more of a 'handbook' feel than the 'field-guide' style of the previous Hamlyn photographic guide (to the birds of Britain and Europe). In an unwelcome change of format from that work, there are no line-drawings to clarify identification points, and no distribution maps. Too high a frequency of spelling errors, particularly in subspecies' names in the captions, also seriously limits the value of the text for reference purposes. The high standard, completeness of coverage and, in some cases, rarity of the photographs, however, make this book an essential purchase for any wader enthusiast.

*John H. Marchant*

## Managing Habitats for Conservation.

Edited by William J. Sutherland & David A. Hill.

Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. 399 pages; 19 colour plates; 118 black-and-white plates. ISBN 0-521-44776-3, paperback £17.95; ISBN 0-521-44260-5, hardback £55.00.

This book is aimed at conservationists responsible for managing an area and provides the information necessary to make sound management decisions. It is a practical guide to what needs to be done, but does not describe the techniques, which can be found in British Trust for Conservation Volunteers manuals, for example.

Introductory chapters on the principles of ecological management and preparing management plans are followed by separate chapters by well-known experts, such as John Andrews, Chris Baines, David Bellamy, Richard Hobbs, Nigel Holmes and George Peterken, on ten major habitats, including waterbodies, grasslands, farmland, woodland and urban areas, as well as one on access,

which covers car parks, footpaths, hides and signs.

The authors use their wide experience to give many valuable insights into problems, and their solutions are often illustrated by excellent, clear diagrams. The book is, indeed, copiously illustrated, but the inclusion of purely decorative colour plates was surely unnecessary for the specialised audience looking for the hard information which this book provides.

This book should be on every land-manager's bookshelf (and mostly off it) and, at a paperback price of under £18, it is great value.

*Franklyn Perring*

**Birds in Europe: their conservation status.**

Compiled by Graham M. Tucker & Melanie F. Heath with L. Tomiałojć & R. F. A. Grimmett.

BirdLife International, Cambridge, 1994. 600 pages; numerous maps. ISBN 0-947888-29-9. Paperback £29.50.

This work can only be described as monumental. It provides, for the first time, a detailed review of Europe's birds, classifying 514 regularly occurring species according to their conservation status. As a testament to the amount of information contained in the book, there are 72 pages of references.

Be prepared—it makes depressing reading and contains many surprises. The most-threatened species are dealt with in detail. Information is given about distribution, population trends, threats and conservation measures. A table gives details of the present breeding or wintering population and whether the numbers are declining, increasing or stable. Where appropriate, a map also shows

the status in each country.

What is depressing is that so many of the maps are peppered with blue arrows showing declines. Among the surprises is that the Common Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*, substantially declining over most of Europe, is increasing most in the UK. The message within the book is that positive conservation initiatives can help. Anyone travelling to a European country should use this book to find out what is really happening and give support to the often-struggling BirdLife partners, who are all trying to halt these worrying declines among Europe's birds.

*Chris Harbard*

**The Oxford Book of Creatures.** By Fleur Adcock & Jacqueline Simms. (OUP, Oxford, 1995. 387 pages. ISBN 0-19-214225-7. £17.99) Poetry and prose on everything from Adder and Archaeopteryx to Yellowhammer and Zebra, by authors as diverse as Richard Adams and Aesop to Alfred, Lord Tennyson, J. R. R. Tolkien, Virginia Woolf and W. B. Yates. Good browsing stuff. *JTRS*

**Birds to Watch 2: the World list of threatened birds.** By N. J. Collar, M. J. Crosby & A. J. Stattersfield. (BirdLife International, Cambridge, 1994. 407 pages. ISBN 0-946888-30-2. Paperback £20.50) This book replaces *Birds to Watch* (reviewed *Brit. Birds* 82: 84). It deals with the same subject in the same basic manner, but presents an entirely new evaluation of the World's threatened bird species using new IUCN criteria. A total of 1,111 species is identified as threatened, and for each one there is a brief summary of distribution, numbers and threats, with precise coding of its status. The book also lists 11 species as Conservation Dependent, 66 as Data Deficient and 875 as Near-threatened. In all, therefore, one-fifth of the World's birds are shown to be at some risk of global extinction. The book identifies considerable gaps in our knowledge of some species: information that could be crucial to their survival.

*RJP*

**Collins Atlas of Bird Migration.** General Editor Jonathan Elphick. (HarperCollins, London, 1995. 180 pages. ISBN 0-00-220038-4. £16.99) This is a lavishly illustrated and very informative introduction to bird migration, and with Chris Mead and Dr Malcolm Ogilvie among the contributors we can expect the content to be both reliable and entertaining. After a very thorough review of why and how birds migrate, the different migration strategies of a wide range of species are described. Glance through the pages and any thought of migration being a straightforward, north-south seasonal movement disappears at once, because here, graphically portrayed for us, is a variety of highly complex, individual migrations.

The bright, bold maps are sometimes a little difficult to follow, especially when information about two species has been condensed onto one map, but that is a quibble. This book provides a valuable source of information.

*Peter Holden*

**To Fair Isle and Back.** By John Holloway. (Stronsay Bird Reserve, Mill Bay, Stronsay, Orkney, 1995. 112 pages. ISBN 0-9526298-0-1. Paperback £8.50 + £1 p & p) The story of the making of his own nature-reserve-cum-bird-observatory on Stronsay, Orkney, illustrated with his own evocative paintings. It would be easy to sink into envy as one reads of splendid selections of rare migrants, but the correct emotion should be admiration, for

John & Sue Holloway chose the site carefully, gave up the 'soft life' of southern England and created the habitats where most of their birds are now found. This book tells the story, and, if you want to go and visit them, telephone 01857 616363.

*JTRS*

**Where to Watch Birds in Italy. Compiled by Lega Italiana Protezione Uccelli.** (Christopher Helm, London, 1994. 224 pages. ISBN 0-7136-3867-2. Paperback

£10.99) Though not usually regarded as a major birding destination, Italy has a lot to offer visiting birders, as is well shown by this very useful addition to the Christopher Helm/A. & C. Black 'Where to Watch Birds' series. The guide is well organised, with details of 103 birding areas, useful maps, lists of species, and contacts, often with telephone numbers. Indispensable for anyone visiting Italy.

*RJC*

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Peterson Guide to Bird Identification " in 12 Steps. | By Steve NG Howell & Brian L Sullivan | Houghton Mifflin Harcourt | 2018 | Hardback | 152 pages, 85 colour photos, b/w illustrations | ISBN: 9781328662064 Buy this book from NHBS.com. RSPB Guide to Birdwatching. | (A Step-by-Step Approach) | by Mike Unwin | Christopher Helm | 2008 | Paperback | 176 pages, colour illustrations | ISBN: 9780713679434 Buy this book from NHBS.com. Raptor In-Hand Identification Guide. This article describes the identification of Caspian Gull, a bird that occurs regularly at inland rubbish tips and gull roosts, but is perhaps under-recorded due to limited awareness of identification criteria. Ocean Wanderers - Angus Wilson. Website. Also recommended is "Bird Identification. A reference guide" by Kristian Adolfsen & Stefan Cherrug which covers primarily European species and journals through 1994. See <http://www.skof.se/supp/suppl37.htm>. Special thanks to Bram Aarts for alerting us to some of these sites. Below we provide pointers to particular journal issues, not full citations. This list was originally intended for personal use and the journal selection is limited, but we thought it might prove useful to a wider audience. Periodically we hope to expand it and keep it relatively current. This is an ongoing p... AB, FN, NAB issues are further identified by the season covered within. Contents

hardcover; thick reference to natural history and identification tips on nearly 700 species in USA/Canada; this is a text-only guide and no illustrations accompany the species; 1 page dedicated to each bird with half focuses on description, behavior, flight, and vocalizations; other material given for status, distribution, and migration; identification tactics emphasize impressions of size, shape, structure, and movements more so. Identification: old world. Advanced Bird ID Guide: The Western Palearctic. Every plumage of all 1,000 species recorded in Britain, Europe, North Africa and the Middle East. by Van Duivendijk, Nils.