

BOOK REVIEWS

The View from Hawk Mountain, Michael Harwood, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 191 pages, \$6.95.

Hawk Mountain, Pennsylvania, is the only place in the Northeast where for 40 years the fall hawk migration has been observed daily. This book, written by a devotee of the mountain, a freelance writer, and a birder, is a rambling, anecdotal history of the world's first sanctuary for the birds of prey. Background information on the slaughter of hawks in the early 20th century, the trials of creating a sanctuary, the movement to pass legislation protecting birds of prey, and the ecological problems threatening hawks today is interspersed with stories about the people involved.

The dedication of Maurice Broun, who spend 32 years on the mountain as the first curator, and the daily routine of Alex Nagy, who is currently in that position, are described along with the activities of the Pennsylvania Dutchmen who hate to quit shooting hawks and the birders who come from all over the world.

The flavor of hawk watching at Hawk Mountain comes through. One becomes familiar with the terrain and canny about the weather. Though the chapters are larded with tips about hawks, with references to writings by naturalists and ornithologists, there is much for those with a general interest in the conservation movement.

For the birdwatcher looking for something specifically about hawk migration, there is a new publication by Mr. Nagy and James Brett, Feathers in the Wind: The Mountain and the Migration. In it you will find photographs and maps showing why so many hawks fly past Hawk Mountain, and what weather conditions encourage good flights. You will also find charts that tell when, and in what numbers, the different species migrate. There are pages on each bird of prey to be observed, with photographs, silhouettes, and tips on identification. All this for \$2.00! Order from Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association, Route 2, Kempton, Pa. 19529.

Johanna Alderfer Harris, Belmont

Birds of Big Bend National Park and Vicinity, Roland H. Wauer, University of Texas Press, P. O. Box 7819, Austin, Texas 78712, 223 pages, \$4.95.

Having been a resident of Texas for several years and having fallen in love with the vast expanse of the Big Bend country, I eagerly anticipated the publication of Roland Wauer's new book. Mr. Wauer, a fine birder and a keen student of natural history, must have really enjoyed his opportunity to become the bird historian of the Big Bend from August, 1966, to October, 1971. As Chief Park Naturalist during that period, he spend some 3,500 hours in field research and was able to put together for the first time the complete picture of the region's avian possibilities -- from the peaks and flows of the Rio Grande-Intermountain migration flyway, to the wanderings of rare birds from the Sierras of Mexico into this borderland.

As I read through his book, I again thrilled at the memories of unspoiled desert gardens, the awesome shaded canyons, hikes through linely pine-oak woodlands high in the mountains that overlook the impenetrable thickets bordering the mighty Rio Grande river, and the brilliantly colored slopes of the Sierra del Carmen range in Mexico showing bright red in the last rays of sunset. Because of its great distance from airports and major highways, this region remains one of the least explored but most rewarding bird bonanzas in this country.

Mr. Wauer gives a brief ornithological history of the area, bringing up to to date with observations into the 1970's, including documentation of birds new to Texas (Rufous-backed Robin) or the United States (Black-vented Oriole). The text covers 385 species, 359 of which are documented by confirmation, specimen, or photograph; the remaining 26 are unconfirmed, thus hypothetical. This total makes Big Bend the birdiest National Park in the country and proves once again that nothing seems impossible for birders in Texas. As we read of recent sightings of White-tailed and Swallow-tailed Kites, Groove-billed Ani, Rose-throated Becard, Great Kiskadee, White-eared Hummingbird, Coppery-tailed Trogon, and others, it doesn't seem so incredible that Robert P. Fox of Hingham, Massachusetts, once found a Crimson-collared Grosbeak in this park.

A valuable section of this book is a discussion, (illustrated by color photographs of various habitats) of the Big Bend ecology that thoroughly traces the interrelation of the land,