

BOOK REVIEW

BIRDS OF PREY OF THE WORLD: A Coloured Guide to Identification of All the Diurnal Species Order Falconiformes. Friedrich Weick. Hamburg and Berlin: Verlag Paul Parey, 1980. 159 pp. Illus. \$48.00. (Order through your bookseller or directly from Paul Parey, Publishers, Park Avenue South, #903, New York, NY 10016; telephone 212/686-3605.)

You will not find this book in your local bookstore; apparently it is available only by mail or special order. This is regrettable, for you should be able to examine any book that costs \$48, and this book deserves examination.

Birds of Prey of the World, not to be confused with the Grossman and Hamlet volume of similar title, is in three major sections. The first is a text key for identification based on physical characteristics such as size; bill shape, size and color; cere color; plumage color; and crest shape. The second section is a "Compendium of the Order Falconiformes," containing a brief paragraph on the general characteristics of each genus. The 160 line drawing in these first two sections are superb - to some readers, they alone could be worth the price of the book.

The book's greatest value, however, is found in the third section: 40 full-color plates containing 1140 illustrations of every species of diurnal bird of prey. Each plate portrays similar species, all depicted to scale with the other birds on that specific plate. The birds are shown perched, as viewed from the left; there are no flight silhouettes. Plumage differences based on sex and age, some "color phases," and hundreds of subspecies are depicted e.g., 17 plumages of American Kestrel are shown. A table providing basic information - key features, distribution, and size - faces each plate.

The book is disappointing in several aspects. The text is in both German and English, to give the volume wider circulation at lower cost. This obviously limits the scope of the text. It also proves inconvenient for the English reader. Some tables contain descriptions in German only; the English reader must refer to a table that offers translations of all German terms used in such descriptions.

Second, the quality of the illustrations varies. That is to be expected when examining 1200+ illustrations, but the paper stock is not what one expects to encounter in a volume of such ambition and cost.

The price of the book might be considered a disappointment, but notwithstanding the above, the book is worth it. Weick has filled a major void in raptor literature. No other volume illustrates so many species and subspecies of hawks, in-

cluding so many immature plumages. I'm not familiar with any volume that treats only North American species and subspecies so thoroughly. Nine Red-tailed Hawk, six Broad-winged Hawk, and ten Gyrfalcon plumages are presented. I've certainly not seen, in real life, most of the birds and plumages depicted here, so I cannot vouch for the accuracy of all the illustrations. They are, however, clearly superior to those provided in all but a few of the most recent regional, international, field guides.

Check with your friends and your local library to see if you can examine a copy before you invest \$48 in this book. People who hawkwatch casually, once or twice a season, probably will not want to invest the money. "World birders" and serious amateur as well as professional students of birds of prey will want this volume. There is no other hawk book like it.

Paul M. Roberts

HAWK PRINTS AVAILABLE

The Osprey and Red-shouldered Hawk illustrations in this issue are modest black-and-white reproductions of two full-color prints by Samuel Ward Warren of Freedom, New Hampshire. Full-color, 14" x 17" signed copies of these watercolor prints are available directly from the artist. Unmatted, each print is \$10.00; matted and shrink-wrapped, \$15.00. To order prints, send your name and address, noting which prints you desire (and how many of each), to:

Samuel Ward Warren
Box 278
Freedom, New Hampshire 03836

Please enclose a check for the appropriate amount, including \$1.00 postage and handling for each print. A portion of the proceeds of each sale will be donated to the Hawk Migration Association of North America.

Mr. Warren currently has watercolor prints of a Peregrine Falcon and a Cooper's Hawk in production; they will be available to the public in early 1982. For further information, please contact Mr. Warren at the above address.
