

BOOK REVIEWS

STYLE MANUAL FOR BIOLOGICAL JOURNALS, by Conference of Biological Editors, published by American Institute of Sciences, 2000 P St., N.W., Washington 6, D.C. \$3.00.

This stiff covered book of 93 pages gives explicit directions on writing and preparing a scientific paper and the ethics to be observed. A flat finished paper, abundance of oldface type, and outline form, all make for easy reading. It is well indexed.

Seventy-five percent of the text is devoted to writing and preparation of copy. The remainder of the book details: Approval of Manuscript, Copy Editing, Proof, Indexing, Useful References, and Index. The subject of writing and preparation of copy is a combination of a condensed course in college freshman English and "Watch Your Language" by Theodore M. Bernstein of the New York Times as applied to scientific papers. Conciseness is the theme throughout. "Cost of biological publications is almost six cents a word." Also emphasized is reading time.

Whether you are writing or reading biological journals, use of this book will increase your "writeability" and "readability". However, it is hoped that strict compliance with these style rules will not rob the paper of its author's personality, which adds so much to the pleasure of reading. The Auk and the Wilson Bulletin have adopted this manual in whole or in part. -- Eleanor E. Dater.

WORKS OF THE BUREAU OF BIRD BANDING: Selected Articles from Issue VIII. Translated from the Russian. Russian original title: Trudy byuro kol' isevaniya. Available from the Office of Technical Services, U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Washington 25, D.C. \$0.50.

This twenty-three page paper cover book was published for the National Science Foundation and Dept. of Interior by the Israel Program for Scientific Translations in Jerusalem 1960 by offset printing. I find the booklet fascinating. Bird banding in Russia started in 1913. The Bureau of Birdbanding was established in 1924 when the first bands were issued bearing the national mark. Banding in Russia is almost exclusively in sanctuaries and institutions of the USSR Academy of Sciences.

There are over seven hundred species of birds in the USSR of which over three hundred have been banded. In colonial nesting birds both nests and occupants are tagged. For example, "the Brunnich's Murre (*Uria lomvia*) pair, with very rare exceptions, occupy the same nesting place every year, within an area 10 m. in diameter. In years when there is a cold, late spring, they lay their eggs on the snow. As the snow melts, they gradually sink and settle onto their own ledge, in the same place which they occupied the previous year."

Several types of bands are discussed. In this connection it is noted that Starlings frequently remove their bands. To prove this, two bands were placed on several birds. "Of these forty-one were captured after one or two years and eleven had only one band each." Sizes and shapes of bands are discussed, and an oval shape is advised for passerine birds. "A metal band which adheres tightly to the foot causes considerable loss of heat, and on shrinking hampers the blood circulation, which often results in frost-bitten toes." Nets are not mentioned. Traps are casually mentioned with no detail as to type. Bait is entirely disregarded.

Fascinating, yes, because of the comparisons between our methods and those employed in the USSR. This is one place where we are ahead. -- Eleanor E. Dater.

BIOLOGY AND COMPARATIVE PHYSIOLOGY OF BIRDS. Edited by A. J. Marshall, Monash University, Victoria, Australia. In two volumes. \$14.00 each.

It seems presumptuous for anyone to try to review these two volumes of over one thousand pages in a restricted space. Twenty-four contributors from nine countries, each an expert in his or her field, have contributed one or more chapters to the books. One of the great advantages is that the material is up to date and condensed in one source. This is a time saver for the research worker.

Two chapters, Digestion and the Digestive System, Vol. I, by Dr. Donald S. Farner, Washington State College, Editor of The Auk; and Vision, Vol. II, by R. J. Pumphery, University of Liverpool, England, are of special interest to me. I year ago I was studying the enlarged esophagus of the Common Redpoll and Dr. Farner loaned me the page proofs of the chapter on the digestive system. There was no other material on the subject available in English. This one chapter gave me the material I needed for a paper on the Redpoll that I read at the AOU meeting, and sold Vol. I to me.

This past year I have acquired an interest in the eyes of birds. In Dr. Pumphrey's work on vision I found some of the answers. A few quotations from the chapter on vision should tell you why. "It is often categorically stated that the visual acuity of birds in general is of a higher order than that of mankind . . ." "Human acuity at its best is reckoned to be about 0.5 minutes of arc . . ." "All the available evidence tends to support the belief that the acuity of birds is of the same order as that of men, but that the rate of assimilation of detail in the visual field is much higher in birds. In other words, the vision of birds as a whole is no sharper but a great deal faster than that of man."

In discussing color vision the author says, "No one who has had anything to do with diurnal birds has ever doubted that their perception

of colour is as good as ours, if not better . . ." "Schultze's (1886) observation that many of the cones of birds contain colour oil droplets, red, orange and yellow, has been confirmed and extended by Wells and Judd (1933)." "Nothing is mentioned about blue oil droplets in birds' eyes.

The references supplied at the end of each chapter are a fairly complete summary of the subject discussed. I have one criticism of the books. The shiny paper on which they are printed makes reading by artificial light unpleasant. Their yellowish tint is disturbing. Serious students of ornithology should have these two volumes on their bookshelves. -- Eleanor E. Dater.

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