



BOOKS FOR BANDERS

DONALD S. HEINTZELMAN

FINDING THE BIRDS IN WESTERN MEXICO

By: Peter Alden

University of Arizona Press, Tucson, Ariz.,
1969. Pp. 138. Soft covers. \$5.95

This attractive and useful volume is primarily an aid to bird watchers visiting western Mexico. It can be considered as a companion to the Second Edition of Edwards' Finding Birds in Mexico.

One of the important features of Finding the birds in Western Mexico is a series of detailed location maps each with the best birding areas marked in blue. These should be extremely helpful to bird watchers and banders. The second attractive feature of the book is a series of nine color plates of Mexican birds painted by John O'Neil. These are far superior to the color plates in Edwards' book. Other features of Alden's book which add to its value and usefulness are a list of references, a list of birds known to occur in western Mexico (roughly half of the total Mexican avifauna), and a four year summary of Christmas Bird Counts made at San Blas, Nayarit.

EBBA members planning to visit Mexico will find Finding The Birds in Western Mexico to be one of the essential references which they will want to take with them.

--Reviewed by Donald S. Heintzelman.

A DISTRIBUTIONAL SURVEY OF THE BIRDS OF HONDURAS

By: Burt L. Monroe, Jr.

Ornithological Monographs No. 7, American Ornithologists' Union, Lawrence, Kansas (order from AOU treasurer, Burt L. Montoe, Jr., Box 23447, Anchorage, Kentucky 40223). 1968. Pp. 458. \$9.00 (\$7.20 to AOU members).

Prior to the time (1958) that Monroe began his major study of the distribution of the birds of Honduras, no comprehensive book on the birds of this Central American republic existed or was in preparation -- this despite the fact that Honduras is the second largest (112,087 square kilometers) country in Central America. Monroe corrected that situation with this fine monograph which contains the results of his field studies combined with his critical examination of collections of Honduras specimens, and the ornithological literature of that country.

A total of 663 species are accepted for the Honduras list although the author acknowledges that distributional surveys of areas the size of Honduras are never really complete. He estimates that 710 or more species eventually may be recorded from the country.

The backbone of the book are the detailed species accounts, but sections also are devoted to acknowledgements, an introduction, general physiography, geology, soils, climate, habitats, and a history of Honduran ornithology. Two attractive color plates - one of the Honduran Emerald by Sydney A. Gauthreaux, Jr., and the other of the Tawny-faced Quail by John P. O'Neill - and 26 maps illustrate the book. Particularly valuable is a gazetteer in the back of the book.

Dr. Monroe deserves congratulations on having made a significant contribution to Honduran and Central American ornithology. EBBA members with an interest in neotropical ornithology will be well advised to buy a copy of this fine book.

--Reviewed by Donald S. Heintzelman.

BIRDS OF GUATAMALA

By: Hugh C. Land

Livingston Publishing Co., Wynnewood, Pa. 1970 Pp. 381. \$10.00

Guatemala is a Central American republic slightly smaller in area than New York State and about equal to that of England. Bounded by Mexico and British Honduras to the north and El Salvador to the south, it beaches on both the Caribbean Sea and the Pacific Ocean. Three life zones can be found: the Tropics (hot), Subtropics (cool) and Montane (cool). This ecological diversity accounts for the large numbers of species, 660, identified in this small country. The 44 color plates, reproductions of paintings by author Land and H. Wayne Trimm, are very good, illustrating both male and female where appropriate. A scale (inches and mm) at the bottom of the page is invaluable when examining reproductions of birds new or not well known to the observer. Each species is described with a few sentences giving length, predominant color, the status, range, elevation, habitat, and remarks; a small distributional map, for most species, shows where in Guatemala the bird occurs.

One enjoys checking to see if migrants one handles might overwinter in Guatemala, and the more species one finds so listed, the more he secretly wishes to gather-up his mist nets and head for this country so rich in avifauna. The book is dedicated to the much beloved George Miksch Sutton, eminent painter and ornithologist under whom author Land did his graduate work at the University of Oklahoma. After the author's untimely death, at a young age, the Pan American Section of the International Committee for Bird Preservation undertook to have the completed manuscript published. Bird students planning to spend time in Guatemala would be well advised to pack this handsome and indispensable volume in their luggage.

--Reviewed by Kenneth W. Prescott

FINDING BIRDS IN PANAMA

By: Ernest P. Edwards and Horace Loftin

Privately published at Sweet Briar, Va., 24595. 1971. Second Edition, Revised and Enlarged. Pp. 97. Soft covers. \$4.00

Bird-banders wishing to study the rich neo-tropical birdlife of Panama will find this volume of considerable assistance to them in locating favorable places to establish net lanes and trapping areas. Information is given on geography and climate along with detailed descriptions and directions for reaching the best birding areas throughout Panama and the Canal Zone.

Unfortunately, only two maps are provided - one of the Panama Canal Zone and the other of the Republic of Panama. The use of additional maps detailing important birding areas would have been very useful. Perhaps such maps can be included in a future edition.

Although the book contains no bird illustrations, it does contain a list of the birds known to occur in Panama on a regular basis as well as a list of accidentals and other questionable records. A short bibliography also is included.

-- Reviewed by Donald S. Heintzelman.

A GUIDE TO THE BIRDS OF SOUTH AMERICA

By: Rodolphe Meyer de Schauensee

Livingston Publishing Co., Wynnewood, Pa., 1970. Pp. 470. \$20.00

Meyer de Schauensee, Curator of Birds at the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia, is a distinguished authority on South American birds. He has published frequently in the journals and has authored two earlier books (also published by Livingston), Birds of Columbia, 1964 and The Species of Birds of South America, 1966. The handsome plates (31 in color) are by John R. Quinn (plates 1 - 30) and the venerable Earl L. Poole (31 - 50). They are not only a joy to behold but, by placing closely related forms on the same plate, the novice has the opportunity of noting plumage differences although the illustrations are not intended for field guide use. One is struck by the diversity of birds from our neighboring countries to the south which have the richest, robust avifauna both in population and numbers of species (2,924 species) of any continent. The book is arranged by families with each species described in detail, i.e. length in inches, predominant coloration, sexual differences, range in South America, and Americas to the north. The author has discussed the families and provided a key as an aid to identification through the bewildering number of species within the families covered. With some 222 species of tanagers, for instance, I was a little reluctant, at first to locate the Scarlet Tanager. Yet, these keys are good working tools and are particularly helpful when one is dealing with unfamiliar birds.

The combination of keys, species description, and illustrations combine to make this scholarly work of high value to the serious field worker who has occasion to identify South American birds. Of entertaining interest to all North-American bird-banders are the South American ranges of migrating birds which are customarily regarded as North American.

--Reviewed by Kenneth W. Prescott.

THE BIRDS OF GUYANA

By: Dorothy E. Snyder

The Peabody Museum, East India Marine Hall, Salem, Mass. 1966. Pp. 308. \$6.00

This book is basically an annotated check-list of the 720 species of birds which have been recorded in Guyana (formerly British Guyana), including brief descriptions of the species, their voices, and their distribution. The author has researched her subject carefully and few errors appear to be present. I noted, however, that Trinidad should be included in the range given for the Bat Falcon.

A little larger than standard field guide size, The Birds of Guyana apparently has been written to assist visitors to Guyana in bird identification. Unfortunately, its value in this respect is limited because there are no illustrations of birds anywhere in the book. Surely some pen and ink drawings could have been included! However, field guides to birds of countries in the vicinity of Guyana contain illustrations of many of the species on the Guyanan list. A map of Guyana, on the inside front and back covers is of considerable value.

Despite the unfortunate lack of illustrations, The Birds of Guyana is a major contribution to the ornithological literature of that country, and anyone with some experience with neotropical birds will find the book extremely useful.

--Reviewed by Donald S. Heintzelman.

THE BIRDS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LIMA, PERU

By: Maria Koepcke (Translated by Erma J. Fisk)

Sponsored by the Laboratory of Ornithology, Cornell University. Livingston Publishing Company, Wynnewood, Pa. 1970. Pp. 144. \$4.95.

During recent years, there has been a tremendous increase in popular interest in the birds of South America. This has created a demand and need for authoritative books dealing with the interesting avifauna of various parts of South America. This English language edition of Dr. Koepcke's Las Aves del Departamento de Lima, published in Spanish in 1964 (see review, EBBA News, 28(2):73-74), is a most welcome contribution which helps to fill a void in the non-technical ornithological literature of a portion of the western part of South America. (Persons interested in the non-technical ornithology of the coast of

Peru may also wish to read Robert Cushman Murphy's Bird Islands of Peru published in 1925).

Slightly larger than standard field guide size, the book is designed for field use and will be of great value to anyone visiting the Department of Lima and adjacent areas to observe birds. This English edition treats 331 species, 18 more than appeared in the Spanish edition. Generally, the species are presented in an evolutionary sequence, each species being briefly described and its status and range indicated. Of considerable value are one or more pen and ink sketches, drawn by the author, for each species. Wide margins allow the sketches to be placed directly beside the appropriate text. Although not quite equal in quality to the work of our better bird artists, the sketches are adequate and helpful in aiding in species identification. Thus they serve the purpose for which they were prepared. Also included on the inside of the front and back covers respectively is a map of the Department of Lima and an interesting sketch showing the zones of vegetation, at the latitude of Lima, from the coast to the top of the Andes. I find the latter of considerable interest.

The one serious criticism which I have of this book is the use of the trinomial form of the scientific name of polytypic species. On geographic grounds individuals of these species which are observed or captured and banded in the Department of Lima probably represent the various subspecies listed in the book, but this normally can not be determined with certainty in the field. Thus use of the binomial form of the scientific names of polytypic species would be desirable.

A list of selected references is included near the end of the book. Unfortunately it is reprinted from the 1964 Spanish edition without much revision or enlargement. However, several of the most important of recently published books dealing with South American ornithology are included.

This is, in short, a very useful and important book dealing with an interesting region of South America. The author and translator, as well as all additional persons and organizations responsible for publishing this fine book, are to be congratulated on a job well done.

--Reviewed by Donald S. Heintzelman.

BIRDS OF ISLA GRANDE (TIERRA DEL FUEGO)

By: Philip S. Humphrey, David Bridge, Percival W. Reynolds and Roger Tory Peterson. Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C. (Order from Museum of Natural History, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas 66044). 1970. Pp. 411. Soft covers. \$7.00.

Isla Grande is the largest island in the Tierra del Fuego archipelago at the southern tip of South America. About 18,000 square miles in area, the eastern half of the island belongs to the Republic of Argentina, whereas the western half belongs to Chile. Ornithological collecting and observation has been conducted on the island for over 200 years,

resulting in 168 species being known from the island, but much still remains to be learned about the island's avifauna. This book brings up to date all that is known about the birdlife of Isla Grande and encourages further ornithological exploration. The book recalls the ornithological history of the island, describes its geography, presents avian species accounts, and provides aids to identification. The latter are primarily a series of black and white drawings by Jack R. Schroeder of Isla Grande's birdlife and will be helpful to anyone conducting field studies in this remote part of the world. Isla Grande is certainly such a spot, and bird banders looking for a worthwhile project in a remote outpost could add greatly to our knowledge of the birdlife of this remote corner of the world. This book is a starting point for anyone considering undertaking such studies.

--Reviewed by Donald S. Heintzelman, 629 Green Street, Allentown, Pa. 18102

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EBBA BANDING SUMMARY - 1970Robert L. Pyle

CORRECTION TO THE 1970 SUMMARY TABLE, EBBA NEWS 34(4):202- Change totals for Florida, as follows: Acadian, Traill's and Least Flycatchers to 5, 27 and 12 (from 32, 12 and -, respectively). Change overall totals for these species to 160, 569 and 993 respectively. Grand totals for all birds for Florida, and overall, are not affected.

The banding summary table carried on pages 196-209 of the July-August EBBA NEWS represents an enormous amount of statistical compilation. This year, the compiler had the help of six assistants, each compiling the species totals for one or more states. Without any prior experience with the EBBA summary, these assistants did an outstanding job that required absolute accuracy and meticulous attention to detail. The assistant compilers were: Jean Nichols at Manomet Bird Observatory (New England states); Frank P. Frazier, Jr. (New Jersey); Walter Tyler (Pennsylvania); Melvin Kleen (Maryland); Walter Smith (Virginia); and Elizabeth Teulings (North Carolina and Florida). Many thanks to these volunteers for their hours of patient work contributed to EBBA.....

The Summary for 1970 is based on a response somewhat smaller than last year, but larger than in 1968. The table below shows comparative figures for 1968, 1969 and 1970. Some measures of the response are included, since the significance of the patterns revealed in the Summary depends heavily on the extent to which the reporting banders fairly represent all banding activity in the eastern region. The 25,192 Sooty Terns banded in the Dry Tortugas colony by W. B. Robertson and his colleagues have been omitted from the 1970 statistics below in order to provide more comparable figures for 1969 and 1970. The total banding reported in 1970, including Sooty Terns, was 320,350, slightly above the 1969 total.