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## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

**Current ornithology, Volume 1.**—Edited by Richard F. Johnston. 1983. Plenum Press, New York. 425 p. \$39.50. This volume inaugurates a projected series, the scope of which is "all of the biology of birds . . . . The aim of the work, to be realized over several volumes, is to present reviews or position statements concerning the active fields of ornithological research. The reviews will be relatively short, and often will be done from the viewpoint of a readily identified group or school." The contents of the first volume are: Comparative avian demography (by R. E. Ricklefs), Determination of clutch size in precocial birds (D. W. Winkler and J. R. Walters), Structure and function of avian eggs (C. Carey), Origin of birds and of avian flight (L. D. Martin), The Great Plains hybrid zones (J. D. Rising), Species concepts and speciation analysis (J. Cracraft), Bird chromosomes (G. F. Shields), Genetic structure and avian systematics (K. W. Corbin), Phylogeny and classification of birds based on the data of DNA-DNA hybridization (C. G. Sibley and J. E. Ahlquist), Experimental analysis of avian limb morphogenesis (J. R. Hinchcliffe and M. Gumpel-Pinot), Variation in mate fidelity in monogamous birds (N. L. Ford), and Evolution of differential bird migration (E. D. Ketterson and V. Nolan, Jr.). Articles such as these seldom appear in journals, yet they are invaluable to both students and experienced workers who want to keep up to date. The editor deserves commendation for having conceived and established this publication, for seeking such a diversity of timely subjects, and for persuading such expert authors to write for him. Illustrations, lists of references, indices.

**The birds of China.**—Rodolphe Meyer de Schauensee. 1984. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, DC. 602 p. \$45.00 cloth, \$29.95 paper. Here, for the first time, is a single volume that describes all of the birds found in China. It is further distinguished from the two-volume work by Etchécopar and Hüe (1978, 1982) by being in English and readily available. The work has been planned as a descriptive catalogue rather than as a typical field guide. Its Introduction usefully sketches the geography of China and the history of ornithology there. The accounts then treat all of the country's 1,195 species (an avifauna smaller than that of Venezuela, covered in the author's 1978 book!). They each provide a concise yet full description "with emphasis in the *form of italics*, on easily dis-

tinguishable markings that should aid field identification." The differentiating characteristics of subspecies are included in cases where they can be seen in the field. Also given are the known geographic range within and outside China, plus the habitat and altitudinal range. Almost nothing is said about voice or habits. Approximately half of the species are illustrated in 38 color plates by John Henry Dick, John A. Gwynne, Jr., and H. Wayne Trimm, as well as 39 wash drawings by Michel Kleinbaum. The plates are grouped together after the Introduction while the drawings are placed near their respective accounts. Bibliography, list of variant names, checklist, indices. Clearly, this reference book will be indispensable for English-speaking students of Chinese birds, both in the field and in museum collections. One hopes that it will be translated into Chinese so that it can be read by the people who have most use for it.

**Voices of the New World jays, crows, & their allies/ Family Corvidae.**—Compiled, edited, narrated, and produced by John William Hardy. 1984. 33 $\frac{1}{3}$  rpm monaural phonograph record, ARA 9, ARA Records and the Bioacoustic Laboratory and Archive, Florida State Museum. No price given. Source: ARA Records, 1615 N.W. 14th Ave., Gainesville, FL 32611. This phonodisc offers sound recordings of 48 species of New World corvids, lacking only one species which has not been caught on tape, *Cyanocorax heilprini*. Hardy has diligently compiled and edited material from his own recordings and those of 27 other recordists. Many of the species are represented by two or more cuts, giving different calls or geographic variants. While the entries for most of the species are of generous length, they do not adequately convey the large vocal repertoires characteristic of corvids. Each cut is introduced by only the spoken name of the species or example, details of the recordings and Hardy's comments being wisely relegated to the album and an insert booklet. There seems to be some problem in the production of this disc: although the review copy did not appear to be warped, the innermost bands broke up and would not play properly unless the tracking force of the tone arm was increased considerably above normal. The record may serve as an aid to field identification of voices yet it will probably be more useful as a source of acoustic data for behavioral and taxonomic research.

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## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

**The plovers, sandpipers, and snipes of the world.**—Paul A. Johnsgard. 1981. University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln. 493 p. \$45.00. In recent years, the tireless Dr. Johnsgard has produced one after another comprehensive summaries on various families of non-passerine birds. Here he has turned his attention to the "relatively typical" charadriiforms from the Jacanidae through the Scolopacidae. The plan and design of the book are much the same as in his *Ducks, geese, and swans of the world* (noted in *Condor* 81:27). Added, however, are two overview chapters, one on taxonomy and evolutionary relationships and the other on reproductive biology. These are helpful introductions but do not delve as far as might be wished. Keys to families, genera and species are given. The species accounts are organized as to names, subspecies and ranges (with maps), measurements and weights, full description (both "in the hand" and "in the field"), and natural history (habitats, foods, social behavior, reproductive biology, status and relationships). They bring together an enormous amount of information from worldwide sources. This compilation is especially to be appreciated for those species that breed outside North America and the western Palearctic, regions whose shorebirds are already well covered in other books. The volume is illustrated with color and monochrome photographs, color paintings of downy young by Jon Fjeldså, and many pen-and-ink drawings by the author; these last include many plates of head profiles as aids to field identification. Glossary of scientific names, list of references, and index. Regrettably, Johnsgard offers little comparative discussion of shorebird biology, explaining that space considerations forced him to leave it out. His book is nevertheless an admirable guide for the identification of these birds and a source for specific information.

**The bee-eaters.**—C. H. Fry. 1984. Buteo Books, Vermillion, South Dakota. 304 p. \$47.50. Several species of bee-eaters have attracted much study owing to their foraging methods or their cooperative breeding behavior. In addition, the family as a whole is well suited for an investigation of speciation and radiation. While its 24 species—a manageable number—differ in details of appearance and habits, they constitute a distinctive and evidently closely-knit group. Fry has taken a strongly evolutionary approach in this book, thereby making his treatment far more interesting than the conventional catalog. Well-organized and comprehensive species accounts lay the groundwork for interpretive chapters on the origin of bee-eater species, their foraging, social, and reproductive habits, and differentiation within the family. A fascinating short chapter deals with the relations of the birds to bees and apiculture. All of this is written in an admirably clear, non-technical style, making the book accessible to biologically literate general readers as well as ornithologists. Eight fine color plates by the author depict most of the subspecies and a few immature plumages. They are placed together with the maps in order to emphasize the crucial relationship of systematics with geographical distribution, a reflection of Fry's thinking. Numerous sketches by John Busby throughout the book effectively show characteristic postures and actions of the birds. Appendices, references, index. This book is a small and modest production by comparison with its only predecessor, Dresser's century-old *Monograph of the Meropidae*. Thanks to its informative and insightful content, however, it is scientifically a far more valuable volume.

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## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

**Bird habitats in Britain.**—R. J. Fuller. 1982. T&AD Poyser Ltd., England. 320 p. \$35.00. Source: Buteo Books, P.O. Box 481, Vermillion, SD 57069. The bird atlas project of the British Trust for Ornithology (see *Enjoying ornithology*, noted at right) yielded data that could be re-organized and used for a guide to bird habitats that have special potential for acquisition for conservation and management purposes. The Register of Ornithological Sites was examined for sites that deserved further study. Descriptions of the avian population, and habitats for important sites throughout Britain are provided. Lists of bird and plant species mentioned, descriptions of methodology, and sample descriptions are contained in appendices. Bibliography. Tables. Index. Of value to the student of bird populations and their relationship to the structure of the habitat.—J. Tate.

**Enjoying ornithology.**—Ronald Hickling, ed. 1983. T&AD Poyser Ltd., England. 296 p. \$30.00. Source: as at left. The British Trust for Ornithology celebrated its fiftieth year (1933-1983) by publishing this history of birdwatching and ornithology in the British Isles. The book gives not only the history of the Trust and its predecessors, but also a review of its major causes and projects. Sister organizations receive more than a friendly wave as well. Conservation and bird problems are dealt with in several related chapters. Forty pages of data may be of use to those interested in: banding and recovery rates, most distant recoveries, fastest movements as shown by banding longevity, causes of mortality, woodland and farmland population densities, breeding statistics, winter temperatures, breeding season rainfall, species ubiquity, and bird weights. List of species names mentioned. Index.—J. Tate.

## Southern African Ornithological Society

ESTABLISHED 1930

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S.A.O.S. CHECKLIST OF SOUTHERN AFRICAN BIRDS, Edited by P. A. Clancey U.S. \$22.

Proceedings of the Fourth Pan African Ornithological Congress, Seychelles, 1976 U.S. \$22.

Tapes of South African Bird Calls are also available.

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## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

**The birdwatcher's companion; an encyclopedic handbook of North American birdlife.**—Christopher Leahy. 1982. Hill and Wang, New York. 917 p. \$29.50. An entertaining, informative, and authoritative encyclopedia of facts and lore about North American birds. More than 1,200 entries, including definitions and pronunciation of terms, mini-essays on important topics, sketches of birders and ornithologists, and practical advice on interaction with birdlife. Appendices on taxonomy, common or irregularly occurring birds of North America, and regional timing of migration with best periods for observation. Thorough bibliography arranged by major subject. Excellent monochrome and color illustrations by Gordon Morrison. If a birder wants one good reference book in addition to a field guide, this may be it.—J. Tate.

**Eastern birds of prey.**—Neal Clark. 1983. Thorndike Press, Thorndike, ME. 174 p. \$6.95 paperback. Source: Thorndike Press, P.O. Box 157, Thorndike, ME 04986. A broad-brush review of the more common raptors of eastern North America, in an environmental conservation format. Illustrated with photographs of uneven quality, from a variety of sources. List of references.—J. Tate.

**North American game birds and mammals.**—A. Starker Leopold, Ralph J. Gutiérrez, and Michael T. Bronson. 1984. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. 198 p. Paper

cover. \$12.95. A reprint edition of a book first published in 1981 (noted in *Condor* 84:196). The same large format is used and the illustrations are reproduced as well as before. At this price, it's a good buy.

**A functional and evolutionary analysis of rhynchokinesis in birds.**—Richard L. Zusi. 1984. Smithsonian Contributions to Zoology No. 395, Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, DC. 40 p. Paper cover. When a bird opens its mouth, not only is the lower jaw dropped but also the upper jaw, or some portion of it, is raised. Movement of the upper jaw occurs in three basic patterns in modern birds, depending on the configuration of the bony hinges. This technical yet clearly written paper examines those conditions, emphasizing that in which bending within the upper jaw accompanies kinetic motion of the jaw as a whole. (This pattern appears in many families of birds, notably the palaeognathous groups, gruiforms, charadriiforms, Columbidae, Trochilidae, and Furnariidae). From a study of skulls and manipulation of simple mechanical models, Zusi describes the pertinent morphology of the upper jaw and analyzes the functional properties of cranial kinesis. On this basis, he constructs a series of hypotheses about the origin and evolution of the different forms of kinesis. His findings and ideas offer stimulation for further studies of anatomy, paleontology, systematics, and feeding behavior. Drawings, references, index.

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## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

**Bird navigation: the solution of a mystery?**—R. Robin Baker. 1984. Holmes and Meier Publishers, Inc., New York. 256 p. \$32.50 cloth, \$24.50 paper. Limiting himself to birds instead of the animal kingdom, Baker has here examined migration more intensively than in his previous encyclopedic work (noted in *Condor* 81:121). He argues for the solution to the "mystery" mechanism(s) of bird navigation as a combination of a memorized landscape map (including smells), sun and magnetic compasses, and compasses based on stars and the moon for night-flying birds. He discusses the major hypotheses of bird navigation, the controversy surrounding them, and the systematic methodology required to prove them. While he has not solved this "whodunit," he has certainly written a

useful text for teaching the scientific method. References, indexes.—J. Tate.

**Falkland Island birds.**—Robin W. Woods. 1982. Anthony Nelson, England. 79 p. Hard paper covers. \$15.00. Source: P.O. Box 9, Oswetry, Shropshire, SY11 1BY. This is a pocket-sized version of the author's *The birds of the Falkland Islands* (no longer available). An introduction to the habitats is followed by bird lists for the islands, and the main text, in a field guide format. Illustrated with over 50 excellent photographs by Cindy Buxton and Annie Price referenced to the text. An authoritative and handy field guide. Endpaper map, index.—J. Tate.