

BRIEFLY NOTED

Birds of Forest Islands in South-east Baltic Region.—Petras Kurlavicius. 1995. viii + 252 pp., 50 tables, 134 figures. Baltic ECO, Vilnius, Lithuania. ISBN 9986-443-07-5. \$20.00 (available from the author: Akademijos St. 2, Institute of Ecology, 2600, Vilnius, Lithuania, e-mail: birdlife@post.Sci.lt).

This fine book reports on extensive analyses of the birds that inhabited several hundred forest islands and numerous forest tracts in eastern Lithuania. Chapter 1 deals with methods of surveying birds and measuring habitats; chapter 2 presents extensive details on the study areas. Chapters 4–6 include analyses, discussion, etc., and four appendices include descriptions of the independent habitat variables used in various analyses, an annotated list of the birds of Lithuania, and a table of comparisons of minimum areas used by species that breed in Lithuania and Poland. Following World War II, a shift to intensive farming practices, and especially draining, have had a significant negative effect on bird populations. Details are supplied for all bird species involved. This monograph contains information and conclusions important to persons interested in bird preservation anywhere, as well as to persons interested in the avifauna of the region.—GLEN E. WOOLFENDEN, Department of Biology, University of South Florida, Tampa, FL 33620.

Current Ornithology.—Val Nolan Jr. and Ellen D. Ketterson, editors. 1996. vol. 13. ix + 359 pp. Plenum

Publishing Corp., New York. ISBN 0-306-45473-4 \$89.50 (cloth)

This volume represents the changing of the editorship for the third time for this highly successful series. Nolan and Ketterson take over from Dennis Power, who edited 7 volumes after Richard Johnson edited the first 5 volumes.

Like most of the preceding volumes, this one has 6 chapters on a wide variety of topics, although the first two deal with cognition. In the first chapter, Marler raises the issue, are primates smarter than birds? (the answer is yes and no), and Balda, Kamil, and Bednekoff summarize much of their work on memory in birds in the second chapter. They conclude that species should have cognitive abilities appropriate for the problems that they must solve in nature, and, more importantly, that those cognitive abilities will not be fully understood unless they are put into the ecological context of the real world (amen!).

The remaining chapters present useful reviews of assessing body condition in birds, avian chemical defenses (a topic that would have been almost unheard of 10 years ago), and the role of birds as predators of insects in temperate agriculture. The last chapter presents a model for offspring desertion in birds based heavily on game theory à la J. Maynard Smith.—KIMBERLY G. SMITH, Department of Biological Sciences, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR 72701, e-mail: kgsmith@comp.uark.edu