

BOOK REVIEWS

EDITED BY JEFFREY S. MARKS

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Books on Hawks and Owls: an Annotated Bibliography. By Richard R. Olendorff, Dean Amadon, and Saul Frank. 1995. Proceedings of the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology, Vol. 6, No. 2. 89 pp., frontispiece. ISSN 0511-7550. Paper, \$10.00.—This compilation contains more than 600 citations of books and monographs from throughout the world that are devoted to falconiforms and strigiforms. Entries are listed alphabetically by author and cross-referenced for junior authors. The annotations range from long paragraphs to single sentences. Many of the longer annotations contain personal anecdotes that are available nowhere else. As a result, the bibliography is interesting to read in addition to being useful. An added bonus is the color frontispiece of a harpy eagle (*Harpia harpyja*) painted by Louis Agassiz Fuertes in 1899.

The treatment appears to be very complete for books (including several 1995 titles) but is less so for monographs. For example, three *Wildlife Monographs* are included (Clark 1975, McGarigal et al. 1991, Hayward et al. 1993), but four are excluded (Ellis 1979, Forsman et al. 1984, Swenson et al. 1986, McClelland et al. 1994). My only major criticism is that the bibliography contains no index. This is especially troublesome if one wishes to obtain a list of titles for a particular species. Granted, many of the books treat multiple species, and it would have been unwieldy to index each mention of a species. Nonetheless, an effort to index individual species and a few broad subject categories would have enhanced the utility of the bibliography. Despite this criticism, *Books on Hawks and Owls* is well worth obtaining. It is a fine testimony of the late Butch Olendorff's commitment to his profession.—**Jeff Marks, Montana Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit, University of Montana, Missoula, MT 59812 U.S.A.**

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The Wind Masters. By Pete Dunne. 1995. Houghton Mifflin Company, New York, NY. xvi + 263 pp., 66 scratchboard illustrations by David Sibley. ISBN 0-395-65235-9. Cloth, \$22.95.—This is a collection of vignettes (varying in length from 6–12 pages) on the 33 species of diurnal raptors that nest in North America north of Mexico. Included are the three cathartid vultures, although Dunne acknowledges that these birds are probably ciconiiforms rather than falconiforms. The Aplomado falcon (*Falco femoralis*) is omitted because the last documented nesting in the U.S. was in 1952. Each chapter is a fictional portrayal of an individual or pair of the species in question. The participants are placed in real situations where they perform plausible behaviors, but they “have a life beyond the disciplined standards that distinguish scientific treatments.” Thus, a male gyrfalcon (*Falco rusticolus*) waits hopefully for the return of its mate to a lonely cliff on Alaska's North Slope, a female Harris' hawk (*Parabuteo unicinctus*) bemoans the fact that her mate is an inept lover (although he's a “terrific” hunter), a black vulture (*Coragyps atratus*) hisses a few bars of *Teddy Bear's Picnic* while waiting for the morning thermals to develop, and a captive adult California condor (*Gymnogyps californianus*) dreams of the days when she soared as a free-flying juvenile.

Anthropomorphic accounts of wild animals seldom contribute anything of value and typically make me cringe. Such is not the case here. Dunne's portrayal of a gray hawk (*Buteo nitidus*) catching a lizard along Sonoita Creek brought me back to an afternoon more than a decade ago when I watched my first gray hawk, which had just caught a snake along that very same creek. His descriptions of the flight styles of short-tailed hawks (*Buteo brachyurus*) and white-tailed hawks (*B. albicaudatus*) left me with great disappointment that I have never seen these beautiful and distinctive species. Aside from the wonderful prose, each chapter contains

an informative tidbit or two about the natural history of the species depicted. For example, readers will learn of the white-tailed hawk's predilection for hunting along the edges of grass fires, the northern harrier's (*Circus cyaneus*) tendency for polygynous nesting, and the Swainson's hawk's (*Buteo swainsoni*) fondness for grasshoppers.

The book is not without fault, however. Dunne's description of mutualism between merlins (*Falco columbarius*) and their shorebird prey, and his assertion that territoriality benefits "populations" of harriers, exhibit an implicit acceptance of group selection theory. In several places he uses "juvenile" to describe "juvinal" plumages, and he does not consider tail feathers to be flight feathers (they are). The crested caracara should be placed in the genus *Caracara*, not *Polyborus*. Recent develop-

ments in DNA-DNA hybridization are attributed to Fred Sibley (rather than to Charles Sibley), and a red-tailed hawk's (*Buteo jamaicensis*) pituitary gland is allegedly stimulated into action by sunlight (the hypothalamus reacts to changes in photoperiod and stimulates the pituitary). At one point, "Ted" the fledgling peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) suddenly sports a "blue-gray back and helmeted head" of an adult. These criticisms are really minor quibbles. *The Wind Masters* is a wonderful book that is both informative and a joy to read. Written for a lay audience, it nonetheless will be cherished by open-minded professionals who appreciate good nature writing and are willing to accept that, perhaps condors *do* dream.—**Jeff Marks, Montana Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit, University of Montana, Missoula, MT 59812 U.S.A.**