

# Books

**Population Ecology of the Bobwhite.** John L. Roseberry and Willard D. Klimstra. 1984. Southern Illinois University Press, Carbondale and Edwardsville. xx + 259 pp. \$25.00.

In this book, Roseberry and Klimstra present a detailed demographic analysis of some 30 years of data that were derived mainly from one population of Northern Bobwhite in southern Illinois. Such long strings of continuous data for single populations are most conspicuous by their absence. The authors should be congratulated for their persistence in keeping this study going and in now bringing the results forward for the use of others. The book is well organized and the writing is usually clear and succinct. The principal focus of the study is on populations, not on the general biology of Bobwhite.

The long-term core of data for this book comes from four seasonal censuses each year, beginning in 1953 and continuing through 1979. Censuses were conducted pre-and post-hunt, mid-winter (17 years only), and just prior to breakup of winter coveys. Intensive nesting studies were conducted from 1952 through 1963, and less intensively from 1964 through 1966. Other major sets of data come from the monitoring of hunting pressure and harvests, the monitoring of land use and habitat conditions, and an examination of weather and lunar records.

In my opinion, the greatest strength of this study lies in the long-term census data. These data do document trends, although I am not convinced that the "carrying capacity" of the census area declined over the period of study, as suggested by the authors. Data in their Fig. 24 suggest to me that breeding densities were generally equal to, or higher, from 1965 to 1980 than from 1954 to 1964. The indicated decline in fall numbers (Fig. 23) could result from changes in the local distribution of quail in this season, changes that could have been brought about by differences in land use and habitat between early and later years of the study. If breeding densities have not declined, despite documented changes in habitat, this tells us a lot about the resilience or tolerance of breeding birds.

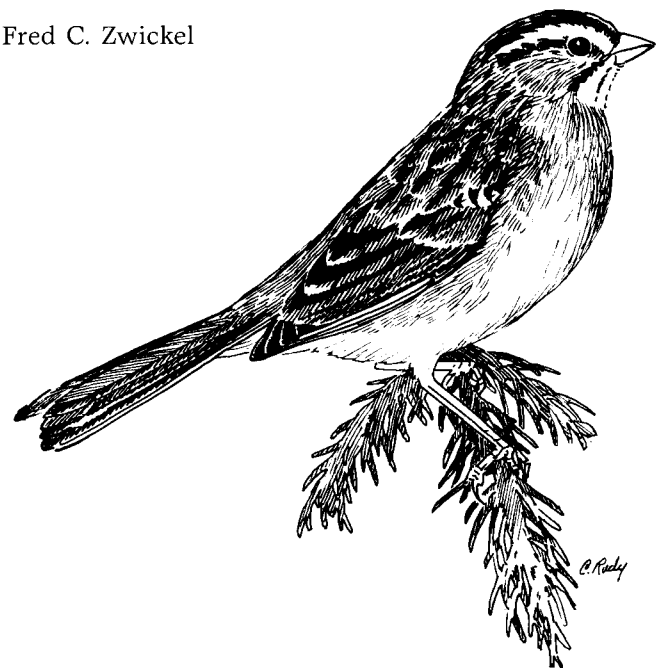
The census data also may represent a major weakness of this study. No repeat censuses were conducted and we must depend on the confidence of the authors that "census errors seldom exceeded 15 percent" (p. 5). For monitoring long-term trends, this kind of error may not be too important, but for detailed analyses of mortality and recruitment, it may cause problems. I certainly am less comfortable with the analyses of mortality and recruitment than with the data on trends. I also am less than comfortable with the implication (p. 5) that censuses were

comparable in all seasons. There can be no doubt that there are important seasonal changes in behavior of many species. If true for Bobwhite, seasonal biases in censusing could have a marked effect on the calculation and analyses of mortality and recruitment rates, two major sections of the book.

As far as I can tell, no birds were banded during this study. This is unfortunate, for even a moderate and periodic banding program might have helped to allay some of the concerns expressed above. Banding could have been used to examine local distribution and movements, to provide independent checks of mortality rates, recruitment rates, and population estimates derived from census data, to double-check some of the effects of exploitation by hunters, and to examine year round sex ratios (those reported appear to represent birds killed by hunters only). With such data, some of the interpretations and conclusions might have either changed or been greatly strengthened.

Despite some of my reservations expressed above, this is a useful book for those interested in populations. In contrast to the authors of many such monographs, Roseberry and Klimstra have attempted to integrate their findings with more general population theory. This coverage is comprehensive and demonstrates again that so-called *game* species can be useful subjects for examining general processes (for other examples see Bendell. 1972. *Int. Ornithol. Congr. Proc.* 15:170-177; Bradbury. 1981. *In: Alexander and Tinkle (eds.). Natural Selection and Social Behavior.* Chiron. Press; Payne. 1984. *Ornithol. Monogr.* No. 33; and Wiley. 1974. *Quart. Rev. Biol.* 49:201-227).

Fred C. Zwickel



---

# Books

---

**Birds - Their Latin Names Explained.** A.F. Gotch. 1981. Blandford Press, Poole, Dorset, England. Distributed in USA by Sterling, New York. 348 pp. \$22.50.

This is a companion book to **Mammals - Their Latin Names Explained**, highly praised by **Nature** as "a mine of information and illumination to naturalists." The present book on birds is equally interesting. It cannot help but add to one's knowledge of little details, ideal for one-upmanship. Gotch is especially strong on mythology. His historical research goes back 2000 years, giving the scholarly details about Marcus Terentius Varro and the derivation of the Latin word for wagtail. We learn that neither *Bubulcus ibis* or *Myxeria ibis* are ibises.

Gotch has provided derivation of Latin names for 1,850 species of approximately 8,600 World-wide. North American species are rather thinly represented. He lists Clark's Nutcracker but not Lewis' Woodpecker. His Rock Wren is a species that occurs only on South Island, New Zealand, with no mention of the American species by the same name. Unfortunate errors include the claim that Clark's Nutcracker was first described from British Columbia, instead of Idaho, and that Lewis became governor of Louisiana in 1907 rather than 1807. Grey Catbird should be Gray Catbird; Virgil is misspelled; there are a number of errors concerning hyphenated names, and one bad grammatical error appears on page 76.

Space is wasted by occasional notes about behavior and anatomy; while interesting, these are readily available elsewhere. There is of necessity considerable repetition when the same Latin specific name recurs in following species. English names for order and families of birds are not provided.

North Americans would be better advised to search for a second-hand copy of Coues' *Key to North American Birds* (1884 & 1894), which provides derivations of Latin names of all species in the United States and Canada. Nevertheless, Gotch often improves on Coues. For the Eurasian Wigeon, *Anas penelope*, Coues merely states that Penelope is a mythological name, whereas Gotch tells us who Penelope was. For the Prothonotary Warbler, Coues correctly states that this refers to a "first notary or scribe" followed by "Why?" Coues did not appreciate, as Gotch does, that the prothonotary in ancient Rome wore yellow robes. For the Wheatear, Gotch's translation of *Oenanthe* as "the first shoot of the vine" is better than Coues' "Grape-flower."

There are doubtful statements such as: "The name *doewitcher* is of Iroquoian origin; the Iroquois are an American-Indian people." The source is not given. (Leahy in *The Bird-watcher's Companion* tells us that dowitcher may be a corruption of *deutscher*, relating to the popularity of this bird on the tables of New York Dutchmen of an earlier age.) We are told that the Christmas Island Frigatebird was described from the Indian Ocean about 200 miles south of Java, without mentioning possible confusion with the better known Christmas Island in the Pacific Ocean. We are not told that the William Cooper for whom the Cooper's Hawk was named was the father of the famous ornithologist James Graham Cooper.

Because Gotch deals only with people for whom birds were named, and usually fails to mention those who named the birds, we are not told the fascinating stories behind the naming of Sabine's Gull, Forster's Tern or Wilson's Phalarope, all of which concern what is now Canada. Under the Eastern Kingbird, *Tyrannus tyrannus*, he tells us that two authors gave each name separately, without explaining that Linnaeus named the species in 1758 and Lacepede named the genus in 1799.

Perhaps more important, Gotch greatly overstates the unchangeability of Latin names as compared to English or vernacular names. He fails to explain the dynamic state of classification, species being lumped or split as new knowledge and interpretations develop. It is not strictly correct to speak of hybrids between subspecies, as he does with Hooded Crow. Unfortunately Gotch used secondary rather than primary sources. For instance, he did not consult Coues, the authoritative World checklist begun by J.L. Peters, nor the *American Ornithologists' Union Check-list*. The neophyte will nevertheless find useful his 7-page explanation of generic and specific names.

This book will be of value chiefly to those interested in birds of other parts of the World.

C. Stuart Houston

### Harris Sparrow Research Award

The Inland Bird Banding Association is seeking research proposals to study the Harris Sparrow. A \$100 stipend will be awarded at the annual banquet in Moline, Illinois. Proposals are to be sent to: Terrence N. Ingram, Chairman, Endowment Fund, Inland Bird Banding Association, Box 155, Apple River, IL 61001.