

REVIEW

Montana Bird Distribution: Preliminary Mapping by Latilong. Palmer David Skaar. 1975. iv + 56 p. Available from the author, 501 S. Third, Bozeman, Montana 59715. \$2.50 postpaid.

The latilong system of bird distribution used in this book is a rather new development in geographical ornithology. A latilong is a one degree square lying between pairs of longitude and latitude lines. Using this method, latilongs from any part of the world can be compared for diversity of bird life, providing that equal field work has been done in each latilong. This cannot be done using political or geographical areas because the sizes and shapes are so variable and cannot be compared statistically. Skaar, in his introduction, presents the problems as well as the benefits of this system. The biggest problems he encountered were unevenness of coverage between latilongs and the impersonality of the strict symbol approach that he used.

The book is written in three parts. First is an explanation of the techniques and symbols used in the text. Second is an exhaustive list of sources of information for unpublished records and a bibliography. The main body of the book is composed of the maps themselves. The maps are groups of 47 letters typed in the shape of Montana, each letter telling the known status of the bird in each latilong. Status is quite simple, with no attempt to discuss relative abundance; either the bird is a transient, suspected breeding or known breeding. Another set of six letters maps the winter distribution of each species as to whether it has overwintered or just been recorded in winter. A third set of two figures tells the status of the species in the state, as to whether a specimen or photo exists, and the number of occurrences for rare species.

As Skaar points out in his title, this is a preliminary distributional mapping and not the final product. He hopes this will spur local field work in poorly covered latilongs, resulting in an authoritative coverage of the state at some future date. This book should definitely be studied by anyone planning a distributional mapping project for any state or region, and by anyone interested in Montana birds.

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BULLETIN BOARD

PACIFIC SEABIRD GROUP MEETING

The PSG will hold its next annual meeting on 6-9 January 1977, at Asilomar, Pacific Grove, California. Announcement of the meeting and a call for papers will be mailed to members in early fall. Those not members and wishing to receive this information may write to the Secretary, Kees Vermeer, Canadian Wildlife Service, 5421 Robertson Road, Delta, British Columbia V4K 3N2, Canada. The Chairman of the Local Committee is L. Richard Mewaldt, Avian Biology Laboratory, California State University, San Jose, CA 95192.

The meeting will include a symposium on shorebirds in marine environments, to be held Friday 7 January. It is being arranged by Frank A. Pitelka, Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720. Persons interested in the symposium may write to him for information.

Additional details regarding the annual meeting will also appear in the fall issue of the Pacific Seabird Group Bulletin (Editor, Daniel W. Anderson, Division of Wildlife and Fisheries Biology, University of California, Davis, CA 95616).