

REVIEW

BIRDWATCHER'S GUIDE TO WILDLIFE SANCTUARIES. Jessie Kitching. 1976. Arco Publishing Company, New York. xv + 233 p., 20 black and white photos. \$8.95.

This interesting little volume describes 295 wildlife sanctuaries in the United States and Canada. The author's aim is to present useful information about "...most of the major and many of the smaller sanctuaries that will admit the public..."

The sanctuaries and refuges are listed alphabetically by state. Address and directions for reaching each sanctuary are given first, followed by a brief list of rare or endangered species that occur, and an equally brief list of common species. A brief description of the refuge is then given, usually including other biological, historical or geological points of interest, activities allowed and precautions that should be taken. Also included are the dates and authors of refuge checklists.

I assume this book was written to aid the traveler in planning a bird watching trip to any part of the country. In this regard I feel the book would have limited usefulness. Usually only 3-5 rare or endangered species are listed. These include birds on the federal endangered species list and also those that are only rare on the refuge in question. Often birds are listed that one could not expect to find at the same location in a lifetime, e.g., a Yellow-green Vireo at Silverwood Wildlife Sanctuary near San Diego or a Garganey at El Dorado Nature Center at Long Beach. At other times birds listed as rare for a refuge may be common just a few miles away. This book would not help you find these species. The list of common species is usually no more than 12 species long. It may or may not have the most characteristic birds of the area listed.

Another factor that must be mentioned is that this book does not present a complete list of sanctuaries or refuges. Very few state wildlife refuges are listed. Many state parks, national parks and national wildlife refuges are not included. Some glaring omissions are Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in Oregon and Carlsbad Caverns National Park in New Mexico, both well-known birding spots. In fact, three additional volumes this size would probably be necessary to treat all the wildlife sanctuaries in North America in this manner.

This book would probably be most valuable as a starting point for researching a cross country trip, with visiting scenic spots and sanctuaries foremost in mind, rather than seeing the most species of birds. If used in conjunction with Pettingill's bird finding guides and site guides published in *Birding* and *American Birds* it could possibly be a valuable book to add variety to birding trips. A collector of checklists will find this a most useful book, as it gives addresses for over 290 of them.

Stephen Laymon, 68 Gurnsey Avenue, Red Bluff, California 96080

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REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON COWBIRD NESTLINGS

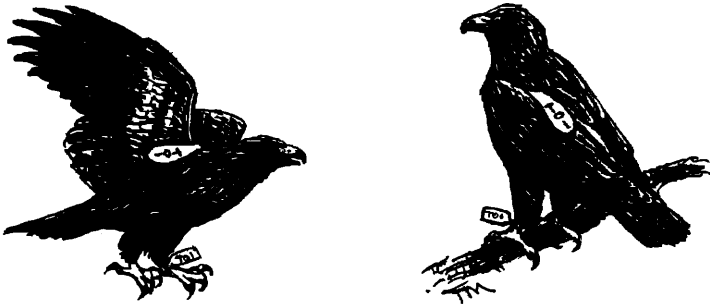
I am studying geographical variation in the gape coloration of nestling Brown-headed and Bronzed cowbirds. In some localities the rictal flanges and tomia are yellow, in other areas they are white. A preliminary report on this study will appear early in 1978 in *The Auk*. Since more information is needed, I would greatly appreciate receiving the following types of data from any location: coloration of the rictal flanges, tomia, mouth interior and eye-lids of cowbird and host nestlings

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(if the latter are present), host species, precise locality data, and date. The information on coloration is best if based on observations of live nestlings but colored photographs are also valuable. My studies would benefit if I had the opportunity to personally inspect colored photos but this is not a necessity. Most nestlings will probably have rictal flanges and tomtia that can be described as clearly yellow or clearly white but if you wish to report data with greater accuracy, and especially if the color seems intermediate, the nestling cowbird can be compared against a color standard. Pages 250-251 in *Birds of North America* by Robbins et al. show the heads of warblers and present numerous shades of yellow. These shades of yellow (or others appearing in Robbins) can be matched with those of live nestlings. *Stephen I. Rothstein, Department of Biological Sciences, University of California, Santa Barbara, CA 93106.*

GNATCATCHER STUDY

As part of a preliminary study of the current population status of the California Black-tailed Gnatcatcher (*Polioptila melanura californica*), I am seeking information on both past and present observations of this coastal subspecies. *P. m. californica*, which is restricted in its U.S. distribution to the coastal sage habitat occurring between Ventura and San Diego and eastward as far as San Geronio Pass, may well be threatened due to habitat destruction. Data including specific localities, dates of observation, and approximate number of individuals are especially desired. Please send to: Jonathan Atwood, 2218 San Anseline #6, Long Beach, CA 90815.



COLOR MARKED BALD EAGLES IN ARIZONA

Research personnel at Arizona State University and the U.S. Forest Service Rocky Mountain Station have marked six Bald Eagle nestlings produced in the Verde River Drainage in Arizona in 1977. Eagles were marked with red vinyl markers to determine movements and wintering areas of Arizona hatchlings. Wing markers can be seen below or from the side and have a white letter (T) and two numbers (01 to 06). A U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service band is affixed to a leg and has a 3 inch red vinyl streamer with the corresponding letter and number on the wing tags. Your cooperation in reporting the following information will be greatly appreciated and help us in gathering information to insure the preservation of this species in Arizona. Information desired: 1) geographical location of bird, 2) date of sighting, 3) activity of bird (with other eagles, feeding, nesting, etc), and 4) name, address and phone number of observer. Please send information to: Bird Banding Laboratory, Office of Migratory Bird Management, Laurel, MD 20811, with a copy to Robert D. Ohmart, Department of Zoology, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ 85281 (602/965-2932 or 4632).

WESTERN FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS

THIRD ANNUAL CONVENTION

TUCSON, ARIZONA—1, 2 & 3 JULY 1978

Our third annual convention, the first under the name of Western Field Ornithologists and the first outside of California, is to be in Tucson, Arizona on the long 4th of July weekend.

HEADQUARTERS is to be the Ramada Inn. The Ramada, just off Route I-10 at St. Mary's Road, is easily accessible by car. It has rooms for meetings and a banquet, bar, 24-hr coffee shop, swimming pool and air-conditioned rooms at special summer rates.

REGISTRATION will be at the Ramada, the evening of 1 July and all day 2 July. Charge \$3.00. Preregistration is requested.

LODGING AND MEALS. Everyone is responsible for their own lodging and meals. The Ramada Inn (at 404 North Freeway, Tucson 85705; telephone 602/624-8341) is recommended. Those who wish to stay in their own campers may use its parking lot. Of course there are plenty of other places to stay or eat. A KOA campground and the Ramada Camp Inn are only a few minutes away on I-10 west.

WHAT TO WEAR. It will be hot—probably about 105°F at mid-day, cooling to 80°F at dawn. Light clothes and a wide brimmed hat are advised. Arizona vegetation is thorny so boots and jeans are indicated when off the road. It could be cool in the mountains, so a light jacket is advised. Also, it could rain—those brief desert down pours start about this time. Insect and chigger repellent might come in handy.

PROGRAM

Saturday, 1 July, in day; travel or local birding, as preferred.

1 July, evening, 7 to 10 PM; get together at cash bar, Ramada.

Sunday, 2 July, in day; presentations by invited speakers, Ramada.

2 July, afternoon; Annual Business Meeting, Ramada.

2 July, evening; Annual Banquet with featured speaker, Ramada. \$9.50.

Monday, 3 July; field trips, starting about 4 AM to beat the heat.

Tuesday, 4 July; no program; travel or local birding as you wish.

FIELD TRIPS. Two planned trips by bus are offered on Monday, each at a charge of \$10.00 per person. The upland trip will be to Ramsey Canyon (the hummingbird capital) and to Garden Canyon (Coppery-tailed Trogon, Buff-breasted Flycatcher) also if fire hazard and the military permit. The lowland trip will be to the Patagonia-Sonoita Creek Sanctuary and the upper end of Lake Patagonia (Gray Hawk, Rose-throated Becard).

Some may be interested in particular birds. They are encouraged to do their own field trips in their own cars. Local people will help on suggestions and directions.

RESERVATIONS for the convention may be made immediately by sending a check or money order payable to Western Field Ornithologists, c.o. William A. Davis, 1155 West Giaconda Way, Tucson, AZ 85704. The full name of each person for whom you are making the reservation and a **STAMPED SELF-ADDRESSED ENVELOPE** must accompany each request.

Spaces on the buses for the field trips will be assigned on a first come first reserved basis, so the earlier reservations are made the better. (If we have enough extra we will get another bus.)

For further information call William A. Davis, 602/297-2865.