

sorts of approaches needed, giving examples of successful rescue and rehabilitation. Even better, for 1,033 of the 1,186 threatened species, conservation targets are specified, mostly entailing direct action such as protecting certain key sites, preventing some sort of exploitation, or restoring a habitat. Where information is insufficient to formulate specific actions, a focused research agenda is proposed.

Given the coordinative effort and resources brought to bear on this book, it seems almost heretic to criticize it, but there are some points of concern. Because the book directly reflects Birdlife International's World Bird Database and their (GIS) database, changes should be straightforward if needed. Of most concern is the accuracy of the species accounts. Because of the global coverage and army of collaborators, I sought advice from several authorities around the world on a small sample of species accounts. The result is a mixed bag. For about a third of the accounts, there was no substantial complaint. For another third, there were minor inaccuracies. Those include identifying features of both the threatened birds and similar species, quantitative inconsistencies between different parts of the same report, and imprecise or erroneous geographical designations. A limitation is that the range maps and range descriptions often fail to distinguish between major populations of a species and occasional records of a few individuals. For the remaining third, there are more substantial inaccuracies, such as incorrect breeding habitat, partially inaccurate range description, questionable listing of threats, or substantial error in estimated population size. Those problematic accounts tended to cluster geographically. This exercise suggested to me that a more thorough review process is needed for many species, this in spite of a listing of ~800 experts described as having provided individual feedback and information.

Two changes would make it easier to access specific accounts of interest. First, the index lists all common names, and all genera, but the species within genera are not listed under each genus. Rather, they are listed under the specific name. Thus, the Saffron Siskin is listed as "Siskin, Saffron," and as "*sie-miradzki*, *Carduelis*," but under "*Carduelis*" one finds only the page number where this genus begins, which is not where this particular species is located. Thus a reader wanting a quick scan in the index of all listed *Carduelis* will not find it and will have to go page-by-page. Second, the species lists in the nation section are not indexed to the species accounts. Thus, one must turn to the index to find the page numbers of the accounts.

In sum, future editions need editing, and details of the status of any one species will require one to investigate the cited sources (not always the best, but a good start). However, for summary quantitative data and an overview of the entire problem, this volume is indispensable.

For advice on specific accounts, I am deeply grateful to Sheila Conant, Todd Engstrom, Hiroyoshi Higuchi, Matthieu Le Corre, and Javier Lopez de Casenave.—DANIEL SIMBERLOFF, *Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee 37996, USA. E-mail: dsimberloff@utk.edu*

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**Birds of the Southwest: Arizona, New Mexico, Southern California, and Southern Nevada.**—John H. Rappole. 2000. Texas A&M University Press, College Station, Texas. xv + 329 pp., 456 color plates, 45 black-and-white photos, 458 maps. ISBN 0-89096-958-2. Paper, \$17.95.—This latest book in the W. L. Moody, Jr., Natural History Series, from Texas A&M Press, is one of a very few intermediate-level, regional identification/birdfinding guides. In the same spirit as Rappole and Blacklock's *Birds of Texas—A Field Guide* (1994), the author's goal is to help the reader "develop some sense of what a particular bird is about" within the Southwest, to help one both find and better appreciate the region's 457 avian species. The Southwest is defined for this book as southern California (north to Monterey Bay, the southern Sierra Nevada, and Death Valley), the southern tip of Nevada (including Lake Mead and the Las Vegas area), nearly all of Arizona and New Mexico, and the northern fringes of Baja California Norte, Sonora, Chihuahua, and the Trans-Pecos region of Texas. The target audience appears to be birders who are interested in seeing and learning more about southwestern birds. It is written in a nontechnical style, with relatively few references and should be easily understood by the layperson.

Short, introductory chapters cover the region's habitats and explain how to use the guide, but the bulk of the book consists of the color plates (photographs, typically of the adult, or adult male if sexes are distinctive), and the species accounts (written in a standard format) of all of the region's birds. Appendices include a list of casual and accidental species and a southwestern birding site guide, with sites arranged alphabetically within states. A list of photographers and photographs and an index (to common and scientific names, birding sites, and other items) complete the book.

In this reviewer's opinion, the book does achieve its goals of increasing the reader's understanding of southwestern birds, and it will likely help in planning birding trips, especially a first visit to the region. The reader will soon realize that most birds

and their habitats range across state and national boundaries, and this book will aid greatly in that realization. The black-and-white range maps allow one to see quickly where and when the species occurs and how common it is, whereas the text offers specific suggestions about where to look for the birds. One can then find directions to suggested sites in Appendix 2. It is gratifying to see a variety of locations throughout the regions described, even those not normally listed on prime birding itineraries. Areas such as the valleys of the lower Colorado River and the Pecos River and the Colorado Plateau (to name a few) are ecologically significant and fragile and add greatly to the avian diversity of the region.

Sections on habits, voice, and similar species are useful, although presumably nearly all readers would also have several standard field guides at their disposal as well. The author does not intend his book to supplant state birding guides, and the latter would be useful for phone numbers, hours of operation, cost, local birding hotline numbers, directions to adjacent birding areas, etc. Such detailed information would be particularly useful for birders with a specific target list and a limited amount of time.

A minor complaint is that the ecologically important southeastern corner of Arizona and southwestern corner of New Mexico were left off the map (even though covered in the text). In addition, it is somewhat difficult to browse the site listings because they are not grouped regionally within states. A map showing their locations would have been useful.

The real strength of this book lies in its description and evocation of the tremendous variety of birds and habitats in the montane forests and woodlands, grasslands, deserts, chaparral, rivers, and coastlines of the southwestern United States. This book should encourage exploration of the Southwest, and may entice nonbirders to do some birding. Birders living in or near the Southwest or planning trips there will likely want this book, and it is also recommended for public and college libraries, especially those in the region.—TIMOTHY BRUSH, *Department of Biology, University of Texas-Pan American, 1201 West University Drive, Edinburg, Texas 78539, USA. E-mail: tbrush@panam.edu.*

& h.—This 5th edition is a major revision of the 4th edition (reviewed in *Auk*, 109:403–404). Along with the expected newly described or taxonomically revised species, the basic classification has been changed from previous editions to mirror that of the *Handbook of the Birds of the World* series (Lynx Editions, Barcelona, 1992 ff.), sponsored by BirdLife International. *Handbook of the Birds of the World's* base sequence is essentially that of Morony, Bock, and Farrand (*Reference List of the Birds of the World*, 1975, American Museum of Natural History). In *Handbook of the Birds of the World*, Morony, Bock, and Farrand has been modified to reflect widely accepted newer treatments of avian relationships and more liberal species limits while still basically adhering to the Biological Species Concept. Although no exact number is given, *Birds of the World* is said to list ~9,800 species. It is designated as the “official world checklist” of the American Birding Association.

Added to this edition of *Birds of the World* are subspecies (scientific names and approximate ranges) of polytypic species; a list of extinct species; a gazetteer; lists of countries sorted by number of recorded species and (separately) by number of endemic species in each; and an English-name index. English names generally follow American orthographic conventions and are largely based on *Handbook of the Birds of the World*, when possible, or other widely used references which mostly are listed in the bibliography. The main list has been spread out considerably, so that the volume now is particularly attractive and easy to use. Outright lapses seem relatively few but can readily be found, for example, interchanged ranges for the two subspecies of *Aechmophorus clarkii*, and locations missing from the gazetteer for the stated range of *Calyptophilus f. frugivorus*. *Birds of the World* weighs over 2 kg and is approximately the same size and bulk as *Distribution and Taxonomy of Birds of the World* by Sibley and Monroe (Yale University Press, 1990). Unlike Sibley and Monroe, however, it contains virtually no explanatory text and seems primarily intended to serve as a standardized tick-list for globe-trotting birders.

Any undertaking of this nature is an effort to compile and present detailed ornithological (primarily avifaunal) information to a largely nonprofessional audience. These are contentious times in avian taxonomy and nomenclature. By selecting the lavishly descriptive, intellectually robust, and widely acclaimed *Handbook of the Birds of the World* as a flagship, users potentially are offered their best contemporary opportunity to view the world's birdlife in a simplified manner but through professional eyes. There are problems, however. One of the foremost results from the fact that only about a third of the world's bird species, through the Apodiformes in *Handbook of the Birds of the World's* sequence, had been covered when this edition of *Birds of the World* was published. For the remaining two-thirds, this edition