

1989

Books

North American Bird Bander

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The Atlas of Wintering North American Birds: an Analysis of Christmas Bird Count Data. Terry Root. 1989. University of Chicago Press, Chicago. 312 pp. \$35.00 paper; \$60.00 cloth.

This is, beyond a doubt, a "landmark publication" that will ultimately provide the basis for comparisons with subsequent and prior decades. Data on 508 species and subspecies are presented covering over 10 years (1962-1972) of 1,282 Christmas count sites. There are maps for 253 species, with another 96 maps being treated separately in the appendix.

As the wife of a compiler and a field worker for other Christmas counts, I know the hard work that goes into a "count" report. Without this basic information, Terry Root could not have written this most interesting book. It is a documentation of (to name a few) annual precipitation, humidity, vegetation, elevation, state and provincial boundaries, etc. Eleven transparent overlays and contour and three dimensional simulation maps that show graphically abundance and range for each covered species further add to the appeal. These maps, along with the accompanying accounts form the heart of the book. All range maps and maps representing both range and abundance patterns summarize analyzed data only; they cannot portray raw data.

Readers are shown where each bird can be found and what environmental factors and ecological conditions make it possible for the bird to winter where it does.

The transparencies are stored in a pocket attached to the inside cover of the atlas. Readers can choose an overlay showing elevation or the location of wildlife refuges, for instance, and place it over the maps in the book to graphically supplement the information in the species accounts.

There are 613 maps and 42 line drawings--a genuine bargain! This book belongs on every serious birder's and bander's bookshelf.

Mrs. Roger W. Foy

Avian Medicine & Surgery. B. H. Coles. 1985. Year Book Medical Publishers, Chicago. \$32.50. paperback.

Bird banders are often called upon to diagnose and treat a sick bird brought to them by a well-meaning individual. You ask yourself, "Has the bird been hit by a car? Does it have avian ectoparasites? Has it been poisoned?, etc..." These questions run through our minds more than once.

This book is intended as a quick reference guide for those who may be faced with an unfamiliar problem in avian

medicine. It is a must for anyone with a rehabilitation permit! Every aspect of this book from the clinical examination to the release of "Casualty Wild Birds" is written in laymen's terminology. The publisher stated, "the book was written by a practitioner for practitioners." This reviewer disagrees--the book was also written for anyone who handles birds. A partial list of contents include: Aids to Diagnosis, Medication and Administration of Drugs, and Anesthesia. Appendices cover: poison likely to affect birds, infectious diseases, parasitic diseases, alphabetical list of manufacturers and suppliers of drugs and surgical materials. There are also various tables covering (to name but three): 1) agents for use against ectoparasites, 2) vitamins and nutritional supplements, 3) antibiotics for use in birds--the penicillin group.

Line drawings are very well done in black and white; so well done, in fact, that there is no need for color. The photographs are also in black and white.

Twenty years ago, when I first started rehabilitation, not much was known about bumblefoot, botulism, or toxic agricultural chemicals and their effect on water birds. Since then, much has been learned and put into practice--this book tells all and should be on every rehabilitator's bookshelf.

Considering all the updated information contained within its covers, Avian Medicine and Surgery is money well spent.

Mrs. Roger W. Foy

Bird-Banding: Experiencing the Scientific Method, a How-to Manual Written for Teachers. Bill Hilton, Jr. 1987. Northwestern High School, Rock Hill, South Carolina. ii + 22 pp. No price given.

This is a well-written manual for teachers contemplating the use of ornithology (specifically bird banding) as a means of acquainting prospective high school biology students with the "scientific method." Much of the book's information applies to banders.

The cover of this manual has an eye-catching black-and-white photograph of a banded Evening Grosbeak clearly showing the proper method of holding and banding this species; also the #1A size band on the right tarsus. There seems to be a good balance of black-and-white photos throughout the manual. I would suggest, however, that the scientific name be put in parentheses and italics following the common name (missing from all text explaining photographs as well as the front cover photograph in the Table of Contents). Perhaps the author could use this as a method of leading the reader to a brief description of ornithological nomenclature.

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The first few pages are written specifically for the teacher considering the possibility of a banding station setup for students taking Biology I and advanced placement Biology classes. The text refers to Northwestern High School in Rock Hill, S.C., where the author is Science Chairman. Overall, the author does a good job of describing in detail the task of setting up such a banding station.

I consider the second half of this manual a valuable resource for beginning banders. Teachers and students could also benefit by reading the topics: Using Birds to Teach the Three E's: Ecology, Evolution, and Ethology. It also would be well for banders to peruse the topic, Topics for Bird Life History Studies, as it contains many ideas for which banding could be used. The author's warnings within this topic about the disturbance of a breeding bird are well taken and should serve as a reminder to banders as well as other observers.

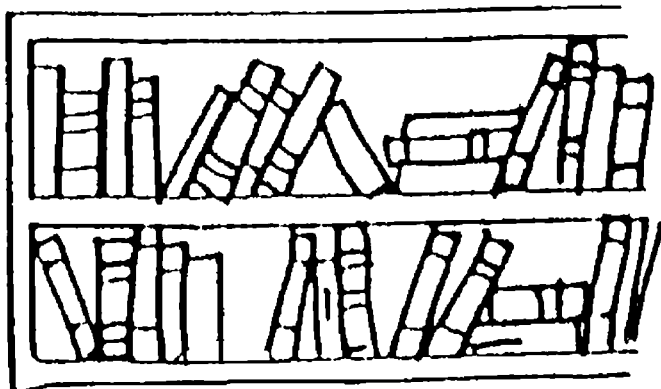
An annotated bibliography for South Carolina (field guides and books) listed in order of usefulness to the beginner is included; also a list of journals and periodicals.

Finally, three topics are included: Guidelines for Biology One Research Projects and Writing a Biological Abstract, for students, and Evaluation of Biology One Research Projects, for teachers. The first contains a subtopic entitled, Writing a Summary Paper, which banders could utilize when deciding to publish.

Overall, the manual is well done and contains a wealth of useful information about bird banding. The entire text was printed with a dot matrix printer which makes this manual tedious to read. If it is within the author's means to have the text laser printed, it would enhance this publication immensely.

Note: The reviewer apologizes to the author for the lateness of this review.

Robert J. Pantle



The New England Hawk Watch will hold a one-day conference on subjects related to raptors and raptor migration on Saturday, April 7, 1990, at the Holiday Inn in Holyoke, Massachusetts (the site of previous NEHW conferences). The program is presently in the planning stage.

Following the day's events, there will be a banquet with Peter Dunne as guest speaker.

For more detailed information and pre-registration, write to:

**HAWKS
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