

1991

Books

North American Bird Bander

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Recommended Citation

North American Bird Bander (1991) "Books," *North American Bird Bander*. Vol. 16 : Iss. 1 , Article 3.
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/nabb/vol16/iss1/3>

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Books

The Kookaburras' Song: Exploring Animal Behavior in Australia. John Alcock. 1988. University of Arizona Press, Tucson. 218 pp. Hardcover, \$19.95.

The thought of a trip through the Australian countryside has an appeal that strikes a cord in the majority of us. John Alcock includes us on a number of his outings made on several visits to Australia. He adds to our understanding of exotic animals and wild places by using these expeditions to give an introduction to some thoughts on animal behavior. In his selection of 27 short essays, he has included a variety of different native animals, including insects and, of course, birds to illustrate examples of pertinent conduct.

Although this book isn't primarily about birds or bird banding, it does examine various aspects of bird behavior in a number of species. Some of the species used to illustrate the topics examined include Laughing Kookaburra (*Dacelo novaeguineae*), Red-tailed Black Cockatoos (*Calyptorhynchus magnificus*), New Holland Honeyeaters (*Phylidonyris novaehollandiae*), Northern Logrunners (*Orthonyx spaldingii*), Mallee Fowl (*Leipoa*

ocellata), Spotted Bowerbirds (*Chlamydera maculata*), Superb Lyrebirds (*Menura novaehollandiae*), Cassowaries (*Casuarus casuarus*), Bell Miners (*Manorina melanophrys*), and Superb Blue Wrens (*Malurus cyaneus*)

The six themes developed are "On Adaptation," "Nuptial Puzzles," "Machismo and the Competitive Male," "Primitive or Degenerate?," "Life with Others," and "Adaptive Altruism." The text is tastefully illustrated with black and white drawings by Marilyn Stewart and there is a range map for each of the species discussed. A short suggested reading list is included.

For the most part, this book is quite enjoyable and well written. The concepts are developed in an easy-to-follow manner and the examples are appropriate. I don't have any difficulty suggesting this book to anyone interested in natural history and animal behavior, but I think it must be looked on as a very basic introduction to the concepts exemplified.

Peter J. Carson

Recent Literature

Banding Equipment and Techniques

The use of mist nets and radiotelemetry in the study of the Ground Parrot (*Pezoporus wallicus*) in Barren Grounds Nature Reserve, New South Wales. R. Jordan. 1988. *Corella* 12:18-21. -Barren Grounds Bird Observ., Box 3, Jamberco, N.S.W. 2533, Australia. -(Methods of capturing Ground Parrots with mist nets at night and during the day are described, along with a technique for attaching radio transmitters. Usefulness and problems with transmitters are evaluated. Zinc/air cell batteries were lighter, but less reliable, than mercury batteries.) MKM

A mobile holding cage for Silver Gulls. Shorebird Study Group. 1988. *Corella* 12:63. -c/o 'Stony,' Campanic, Tasmania 7026. -(A car trailer modified into four holding pens for gulls caught during cannon netting operations kept the birds off the ground. This eliminated a problem with soiled plumage and also allowed researchers to move captured birds into shaded areas during hot weather.) MKM

Survival of Ring-necked Pheasants with backpacks, necklaces and legbands. V. Marcstrom, R.E. Kenward and M. Karbom. 1989. *J. Wildl. Manage.* 53:808-810. -Inst. Terrestrial Ecol., Furzebrook Res. Stn., Warcham, Dorset BH20 5AS, U.K. -(Birds with backpacks were recovered less frequently than birds with necklaces or only legbands. Recovery rates were the same for the latter two groups.) RCT

The variability of biometric measurements. R.T. Barrett, M. Peters, R.W. Furnish and J. Durinck. 1989. *Ring. & Migr.* 10:13-16. -Tromsø Mus., Univ. of Tromsø, N-9000, Tromsø, Norway. -(Variability among individuals in taking measurements may equal that reported between populations. Thus, measurements at each locality should be made by several observers.) RCT

Effects of plastic neck collars on the behavior and breeding performance of geese and their value for distant recognition of individuals. I.P. Johnson and R.M. Sibly. 1989. *Ring & Migr.* 10:58-62. -Dept. of Pure