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Review of *George Miksch Sutton: Artist, Scientist, and Teacher*. By Jerome A. Jackson.

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George Miksch Sutton: Artist, Scientist, and Teacher.
By Jerome A. Jackson. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press. 2007. xvi + 239 pp. Color plates, figures, notes, appendix, index. \$29.95 cloth.

Although it has been 25 years since George Miksch Sutton died, his life has only now been honored with a detailed biography. For the countless admirers of this

remarkable man, 25 years seems a long time to wait, but the delay has been justly rewarded. “Doc” Sutton represented a unique combination of talents: no other internationally known bird artist has also been a university professor (mentoring 19 graduate students), an ornithological researcher (writing 13 books and hundreds of technical and popular publications), and a gifted illustrator (providing drawings or paintings for 40 books and monographs, plus uncounted other publications).

Jerome Jackson, a professor of biology at Florida Gulf Coast University, was not one of Sutton’s students, but a close friend and colleague. Jackson begins his story by tracing Sutton’s family ties through two generations, and doggedly follows his footsteps through ten states. Sutton left deep footprints behind—25 years after he had attended Cornell University, I found that in the mid-1950s his name was still spoken there with reverence and awe by the people who had known him. The distinctive skins he prepared for the Cornell bird collection were usually identifiable as his without reading their tags—they were typically feather-perfect and looked to be more asleep than dead.

Sutton, an introspective and very private man, sadly destroyed many of his personal papers before he died. His *Bird Student: An Autobiography* (1980) documents his life only through 1935 and the end of his Cornell days. Jackson’s book is especially valuable, therefore, in documenting Sutton’s later years, after he had reached his prime both as scholar and artist. Although I thought I personally knew Sutton very well and wrote a small book based on a collection of his paintings of baby birds, I learned much from Jackson’s narrative, which details Sutton’s World War II experiences, his often frustrating years at the University of Michigan, and finally his move in 1952 to the University of Oklahoma, where his name soon became synonymous with Oklahoma ornithology. From there Sutton made repeated field trips to Mexico and the Canadian Arctic, generating eight books and more than 150 short publications, as well as producing some of his best paintings.

In addition to his richly documented text, Jackson provides a detailed account of Sutton’s writings, a list of the books and monographs he illustrated, and the names of his graduate students and research topics. Persons who knew George Sutton will read this book with special interest and great pleasure, for it illuminates the life of this remarkable man as no other single source could do. Those who read it without having met Sutton will doubtless regret never knowing one of the giants of American ornithology. **Paul A. Johnsgard**, *School of Biological Sciences, University of Nebraska–Lincoln*.