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R. G. Cortelyou

Nebraska Ornithologists' Union

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BOOK REVIEWS

Birds of the Great Plains: Breeding Species and Their Distribution, Paul A. Johnsgard, xviii; + 16 pages of color photographs + 540 pages, University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln. Indexed, hardbound \$25.00.

The area covered by this book runs from the Canadian border to Oklahoma and those portions of Texas and New Mexico north of the 34th parallel, from the 104th meridian east to 95th meridian, and the portions of Kansas and Oklahoma east of that. Each species which has bred or does breed within that area is discussed under the headings of breeding status, breeding habitat, nest location, clutch size and incubation period, time of breeding, breeding biology, and suggested reading. For current breeders a range map is also given. As the topic "suggested reading" suggests, there is an extensive bibliography, which includes references for the individual states and the region as a whole in addition to those listed in the species accounts. There is a listing and short description of 44 parks, refuges, and the like, and a map showing their locations; for 30 such areas (treating the 4 Souris refuges as one) there is a tabulation of the relative abundance (and breeding status in most cases) of the covered species. This book is a mine of information, and a good starting point (via suggested reading) for those who want a more detailed information on a particular species.

— Editor

Welcome the Birds to your Home, Jane and Will Curtis, 154 pages, The Stephen Greene Press, Brattleboro, Vermont. Indexed, hardbound \$8.95, paperback \$5.95.

This is a combination of a story of a family becoming interested in birds, and information and advice on the situations they faced as they became more interested. Those comments will be useful to anyone becoming interested in birds, and may well remind more expert birders of points they have overlooked or forgotten. Among the topics covered are: the points to notice on a strange bird before you reach for a field guide; how, why, and where birds nest; life in a nest; what to feed birds; plants and water to attract them; protecting songbirds from their enemies; bird houses and materials to help birds build nests; migration; binoculars and how to use them; bird photography; bird calling; and a chapter on what to do about injured or seemingly lost or abandoned birds. This chapter does stress that in most cases the answer is nothing, but the examples may make the possible exceptions sound too easy and attractive to try. Another quibble: the illustrations of bills for seed eaters and insect eaters are reversed, although the text is correct. There is a short list of names for groups of birds, a glossary, and a short bibliography (including records). In view of the necessarily short treatment of most topics in the book the bibliography might have been longer. The illustrations (black and white) by John Sill are pleasing.

— Editor

Birding Areas of Iowa, Peter C. Peterson, Editor, Iowa Ornithologists' Union, 152 pages. Indexed, paperbound \$4.50 (plus .75 postage). (Available from Mrs. Pat Layton, Librarian, 1560 Linmar Drive, Cedar Rapids, IA 52404).

For some time, *Iowa Bird Life*, has been publishing notes on birding areas of Iowa, and this book brings them together. They were written by 31 contributors, so the treatment varies, but all articles include a map (with varying amounts of details). In addition to the articles there is a map of the state, showing for each county the page number for the appropriate article. There is an index of localities, and an index of birds. However, the latter is limited to those birds the various contributors mentioned in their articles, so it is not a guide to all the places the bird may be found, nor necessarily to all the most likely places to find it.

The book is a very handy guide for anyone who expects to bird in parts of Iowa with which he is not pretty familiar.

— Editor