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6-1982

## "Book Reviews" from *Nebraska Bird Review* (June 1982)

Neva Pruess

*Nebraska Ornithologists' Union*

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Pruess, Neva, "'Book Reviews" from *Nebraska Bird Review* (June 1982)" (1982). *Nebraska Bird Review*. 245.

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## BOOK REVIEWS

Stories About Birds and Bird Watchers, Edited by Mary Beacum Bowers, 234 pp., illustrated, Antheneum. \$12.95.

This very readable collection of short, general interest articles could be subtitled "The Best of Bird-Watchers' Digest". The 38 pieces included all appeared in that journal during its first years, and since BWD is itself a reprint publication, almost everything initially saw print elsewhere. The editor has chosen well and has arranged the stories covering a considerable range of topics and styles, into six general categories. Six double page drawings and a number of smaller ones, by artist Bob Hines, make it an attractive book which would be a fine gift for a birding friend. The book has reposed on my kitchen table all week, and I've worked my way through it, one piece at a time, with great satisfaction.

—Neua Pruess

Audubon Society Handbook for Birders, Stephen W. Kress, 322 pp. illustrated, Charles Scribner's Sons. \$17.95.

This is an extremely useful book, packed with practical information. Both basic and advanced techniques of field identification are covered in two well illustrated chapters. Another covers everything you need to know about binoculars and spotting scopes. Photography and recording are also allotted a chapter. One can hope that everyone who will ever again lead a bird walk or present a slide program will first read the three pages of suggestions on each of these activities.

Over half of the book is an extensive source listing for educational programs, research programs welcoming amateurs, organizations, periodicals, books, and publications. These begin with North American listings and proceed to state and Canadian provincial items. Some information on international tours and world bird literature is included.

The longest chapter in the book is "Building a Birdwatcher's Library", which gives around 500 annotated listings of books, references, and regional publications. This must be used as a starting point for inquiries, since addresses are given but no prices are listed. In this era of escalating costs this is probably a valid approach, but it would be helpful to know if one was considering a \$2 or \$20 item. Also keep in mind that these lists get outdated. For Nebraska our

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out-of-print Rapp *et al* checklist is given; the new Johnsgard checklist is not included. Three lengthy appendices give sources for: (1) binoculars, cameras, recording equipment, feeders, teaching aids; (2) bird book retailers; (3) government agency publications, both U.S. and Canada. The latter includes many free publications and a complete listing of refuge leaflets and bird lists for national wildlife refuges.

All in all a very helpful book, especially for the beginning or traveling birder.

*Neva Pruess*