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Book Reviews of *Bird Navigation: The Solution of a Mystery?*, *The Last of the Curlews*, *A Naturalist's Sketchbook*, *Bird Walk Through the Bible*, *Life Histories of North American Petrels and Pelicans and their Allies* and *Love of Loons*

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BOOK REVIEWS

Bird Navigation: The Solution of a Mystery?, R. Robin Baker, 1984, Holmes & Meier Publishers, Inc., New York. vi + 256 pp., ISBN 0-340-33416-9, softcover, no price given. Originally published by Hodder & Stoughton Ltd. in Great Britain but handled in the United States by Holmes & Meier Publishers, Inc., Import Division, IUB Building, 30 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003.

R. Robin Baker, Reader in Zoology at the University of Manchester, is a noted authority on avian navigation. The word "solution" in the title of this book is somewhat misleading because this book does not solve the mystery of how birds navigate. However, this book is the most thorough, up-to-date review of the various theories on how birds navigate, and integrates these theories to give the reader an idea of how birds might really navigate. The author does an excellent job of presenting all the different ideas in an easily understood and easy to read style. Discussions of each theory include some of the history behind the research, how each theory fits with other theories, how each theory might work on short and long distance movements, and what research needs to be conducted in the future to help clarify how birds navigate. The book explains how birds might navigate under one set of conditions and switch to another navigation technique when conditions change. A fascinating topic presented in a very readable manner.

--- *Thomas E. Labedz, Division of Zoology,
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The Last of the Curlews, Fred Bodsworth, illustrated by T. M. Shortt, x + 144 pp., 6 x 9, Dodd Mead & Co., N.Y. \$17.95 hard cover, \$8.95 soft cover.

This is a reprint, with a foreword by Dr. Harold D. Mahan, and as part of the Edwin Way Teale Library of Nature Classics, of a book originally published in 1955. At that time it was thought (fortunately, incorrectly) that the Eskimo Curlew was extinct, and this is the story of a year in the life of the last bird. Ascribing human-type thoughts and reactions to the bird helps to carry the story along and doesn't seem to be overdone. It is interesting reading and the illustrations are very nice, and, presently at least, one can keep in the back of his mind that the Eskimo Curlews are still in existence. The author is careful to distinguish between Hudsonian Curlews and Whimbrels, but A.O.U. combined them after the book was written.

A Naturalist's Sketchbook Pages from the Seasons of the Year, Clare Walker Leslie, 102 pp., 8½ x 11, bibliography, Dodd Mead & Co., N.Y., \$22.95 hard cover, \$12.95 soft cover.

This is a revision and enlargement of the author's *Notes from a Naturalist's Notebook*. Much of it is in the form of hand lettered notes and sketches, as in a sketch book, with some pages in type. It is a composite year of her life in Cambridge, Mass., and Granville, Vt., and the things of interest she finds - birds, animals, insects, reptiles, plants, whatever. Interesting in itself to the ordinary reader, it has at times comments on her methods and materials in making the sketches which will be helpful to anyone interested as an artist, and one section of the bibliography is on drawing techniques.

Bird Walk Through the Bible, Virginia C. Holmgren, 216 pp. 5 3/8 x 8½, bibliography, Dover Publications, N. Y., soft cover \$4.95

This "is an unabridged, slightly corrected republication of the work first published" in 1972. It should be of interest to anyone interested in the birds of the Bible, or just in birds of the Near East. Several factors complicate the identification of birds mentioned in the Bible: there was no official check-list, so different names might be applied to the same species by different people, and the name might be non-specific, similar to chicken hawk or hoot-owl; there were no guide books nor binoculars, so birds of similar appearance might not be distinguished; Hebrew writes only the consonants and the choice of the vowels is up to the reader, so there can be uncertainty about what word is indicated. An alphabetized glossary makes up a large part of the book, which probably is why there is no index. There are also lists of specific references in the Bible, as well as other information.

Life Histories of North American Petrels and Pelicans and their Allies, A. C. Bent, xiv + 336 + 69 pages of black-and-white plates, 5 3/8 x 8½, . Dover Publications, N. Y., soft cover \$9.95

The original Dover reprint reissued unchanged.

Love of Loons. Kate Crowley and Mike Link, photography by Peter Roberts. 96 pp. 8½ x 11. bibliography, index. Voyageur Press Inc., Stillwater, Minnesota, soft cover \$12.95.

A survey of information about loons, primarily the Common Loon, from prehistory on, but mostly about present conditions, with interesting anecdotes. If you are interested in reading about loons this is a good start, and the bibliography will help you fill in the parts that you want to know more about. If you like to look at pictures of loons, here they are. A book for loon-lovers, or those who could be loon-lovers, or those who just like nature, or good photography, or both.

Photographing Wildflowers Techniques for the Advanced Amateur and Professional. Craig and Nadine Blacklock, 64 pp. 8½ x 11, index. Voyageur Press Inc., Stillwater, Minnesota, soft cover \$9.95.

This book contains very detailed instructions for photographing flowers, with notes on the variations necessary in photographing fungi, berries, mosses and lichens, ferns, moving water, leaves, ice, and feathers. Anyone, not the Blacklocks' equal in the field, who is interested, even casually, in this type of photography will benefit from the Blacklocks' advice. And those who are not interested in taking such photographs may find the example photographs worth the price of the book.