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BOOK REVIEWS

The Birds of Nebraska: A Critically Evaluated List, Tanya Bray, Barbara K. Padelford, and W. Ross Silcock, 112 pp., 5½ x 8½, paper, available from Barbara Padelford, 1405 Little John Road, Bellevue, Neb. 68005, \$4.00 per copy, plus \$.75 mailing fee for 1 or 2 copies, \$1.00 for 3 or 4 copies, \$1.25 for 5 or more copies.

The authors of *The Birds of Nebraska* have examined the records for the 445 species (including Clark's Grebe) that have been listed for Nebraska (some in error), and classified them as to the reliability of the record and the frequency of occurrence. Birds for which a specimen, an adequate photograph, or a recording could be located are Class I-S, I-P, or I-R, respectively; those for which diagnostic descriptions are available are Class II (more than one description) or III; down to Class VI (error, escapee, or unsuccessful introduction). Four hundred and seven species are Class III or better, 38 are not. Birds reported in 9 or 10 of the last 10 years, and a few reported in only 8 of those years, are classified Regular, birds reported in only 2 or less, and a few reported in 3 years, are classified Accidental, birds between these two classes are classified Casual. The authors state "no attempt has been made to analyze either spatial or yearly temporal distribution within Nebraska", nor is there any indication of relative abundance. For the less common species, including some accepted species, both the accepted and non-accepted records are mentioned, at least as to number if not as to exact details. Some idea of the work involved can be gained from the articles on the Mottled Duck and the Mexican Duck in the June 1986 issue (*NBR* 54: 39 and 41), which give more detail than is shown in their book. If you want to know how reliable the evidence is for including a species in the Nebraska list, this book will tell you.

Eskimo Curlew A Vanishing Species? J. B. Collop, T. W. Barry, and E. H. Iversen, 160 pp., 5½ x 8½, Special Publication No. 17 of The Saskatchewan Natural History Society, paper, available from the Blue Jay Bookshop, Box 1121, Regina, Saskatchewan S4P 3B4, Canada, \$9.00 (Canadian), postpaid.

This is the sad story of the Eskimo Curlew, from the first records to the present day. Much use is made of the records of George Cartwright, a British factor in Labrador in the late 1700's, and of the Hudson's Bay Co.'s R. R. MacFarlane's records of his collecting for The Smithsonian Institution in the mid-1800's, in the northwest corner of Canada's Northwest Territories. Myron Swenk's long article, *The Eskimo Curlew and its disappearance*, *NOU Proceedings* 6:25-44, as reprinted with additions by the Smithsonian Institution, is probably the third most important reference used. Swenk's article includes information on the unfortunate market hunting in the Nebraska area. But every location, from Russia, Alaska, and northern Canada, to Argentina and the Falkland Islands, for which a reference could be found, is covered as to status, dates, and localities. There are maps, pictures, and a 30-page bibliography; no index, but a rather detailed Table of Contents may substitute for it. If you are interested in the past, present, or future of the Eskimo Curlew, this seems to be the place to start. (The second line of the caption for Fig. 6, p. 20, should read "Eskimo Curlew, Little Curlew, and Whimbrel".)

Harrier, Hawk of the Marshes: The Hawk that is Ruled by a Mouse, Frances Hamerstrom, 172 pp., 6 x 9½, Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D. C., indexed, cloth \$24.95, paper \$10.95.

This is the story of Mrs. Hamerstrom's 25-year study of Northern Harriers (done in her spare time from the study of Prairie-Chicken), told in short anecdotal chapters that are interesting reading while they bring out some point about Harriers. In addition to pictures, maps, and a bibliography, there are tables of measurement comparisons between the European Hen Harrier and the Northern Harrier, measurements of DDT and allied chemicals from biopsies of Harriers in her study area, results of monogamous, bigamous, and trigamous nesting, and the like.

Birds Worth Watching, George Miksch Sutton, 208 pp., 6½ x 9½, University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, indexed, cloth \$19.95.

This is a collection of short (3 pages or so) articles about 60 different birds, with a color picture of each species included. Dr. Sutton tells of incidents

with the birds, sometimes things that aren't common knowledge, and often includes questions about things he would have liked to know about the birds, but didn't. Only two of the birds are not on the Nebraska list. Because each article stands alone, the book is particularly suitable for casual browsing.

A Revised List of the Birds of Nebraska and Adjacent Plains States, Paul A. Johnsgard, 170 pp., 8½ x 11, indexed, paper, available from Nebraska Ornithologists' Union, Inc. (NOU), University of Nebraska State Museum, Lincoln, Neb. 68588, \$7.00, plus \$1.50 for mailing.

Dr. Johnsgard's Third Printing of his (originally) *Preliminary List* is essentially the original, with some additions, a few in the text and the others on page 120. It does not include about a dozen species included in *The Birds of Nebraska* (reviewed above), mostly escapees or errors, but does include Clark's Grebe. The species accounts give information on abundance, seasonal appearance and dates of migration, and the section of the state in which they occur. The species order is still that of the *AOU 5th Edition*, but since there is an index this is not important. Range maps are included, and a new feature is the inclusion of the *Checklist of Nebraska Birds*, originally published as a supplement to the *NEBRASKALAND Magazine* bird issue. The *NEBRASKALAND* list of the more common birds has had the page number in Dr. Johnsgard's book added. If you want to know if a bird is out of season, or out of its normal range, or you want to know where and when to go to try to find it, this book will guide you.