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## Review of *Oklahoma Breeding Bird Atlas* Edited by Dan L. Reinking

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**Oklahoma Breeding Bird Atlas.** Edited by Dan L. Reinking. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004. xii + 519 pp. Photographs, maps, appendices, bibliography, species index. \$59.95 cloth, \$34.95 paper.

This volume culminates the typical five-year atlas study of breeding birds in a specific state, in this case one well within the Great Plains. Oklahoma abuts parts of five other states of that region and, as such, shares its avifauna with them. The obviously well-funded effort included a full-time seasonal employee each year to survey blocks and enter data, each one racking up an impressive 10,000 miles per season to reach blocks not covered by volunteers. Nonetheless, like most of those before it, this atlas project had to rely upon volunteers to accomplish much of the field work.

The resultant book deserves a place on the shelf of anyone interested in birds of the Great Plains region. The introduction describes the project's methodology in simple terms and defines the categories used in determining the status of each species in each survey block. Like Texas, the Oklahoma project used the standard U.S. Geological Survey 7.5-minute quadrangles maps, but employed a smaller portion of that area as the survey block. Although the section on vegetation obviously describes the subject state, it will also apply to those parts of neighboring states that immediately adjoin Oklahoma. Finally, during the course of the survey, field parties recorded 212 species, of which they listed 198 species as possible, probable or confirmed. Eventually, the survey produced evidence of 160 species as confirmed breeders in the state.

The core of the book, of course, consists of the species accounts. Each includes an excellent color photograph of the bird, an introductory paragraph about its general habitat and behavior, a species description, material on breeding habitat, a nest description, a section on nesting ecology, a section on distribution and abundance, a list of references, a side bar that summarizes the number of records in each category, and, of course, a map of those records.

Undoubtedly, if one looks closely, a few typographical errors will be found. Instead, look at these species accounts as an excellent source of information not just on the status of a bird in Oklahoma, but also for information on the breeding biology of the species. The population trends covered under the distribution and abundance section will serve as a guide to species in trouble or at least give the reader some understanding of potential problems for the future.

If I have one complaint about this volume, it is the choice of colors indicating records on the species maps. Nest records from the atlas field surveys are given in a light blue that is hard to see. Similarly, the medium yellow used to indicate "observed" records also tends to fade into the background, especially where only a handful of such records exists. Since the entire state is used for every species and the survey blocks appear rather tiny in size, the choice of these colors becomes even more exasperating.

Despite their multiple authors, the species accounts have a fluid style, which is probably a tribute to the volume's editor. In these days of high printing costs, the book is well worth the price for those interested in Oklahoma birds as well as birds of the broader area of the Great Plains. **Keith A. Arnold**, *Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences, Texas A&M University*.