

BOOK REVIEWS

NEVER ENOUGH OF NATURE

Lawrence Kilham. 1977. Droll Yankee Inc., Mill Road, Foster, Rhode Island 02825. viii + 273 p. \$10.00.

Professionally Lawrence Kilham is a microbiologist who teaches at Dartmouth Medical School, but he is widely known for his papers on bird behavior, particularly those dealing with woodpeckers. *Never Enough of Nature* is a personal account of the experiences with wild and captive animals that provided data for many of the scientific papers. The book was illustrated by the author's relatives, primarily his wife, Jane. The early chapters of the book deal with field experiences in South Carolina and Georgia, but others take the reader to Africa, Panama, and New England. The style of the book is very informal, almost like a series of personal letters. The author's attitude toward nature is summarized by his statement that "natural history is inexhaustible. One can always make discoveries that are new in terms of one's own experience no matter how much of what one sees has been recorded by someone else. The joy of making a discovery is open to those who will but watch and wait." Dr. Kilham's own studies of bird behavior offer ample proof that the amateur can make a significant contribution to ornithology if he will but watch and wait . . . and keep a good record of what he sees.—EFP

A FIELD GUIDE TO THE NESTS, EGGS AND NESTLINGS OF NORTH AMERICAN BIRDS.

Colin Harrison. 1978. William Collins Publishers, Inc., 2080 W. 117th Street, Cleveland, Ohio 44111. 64 color plates. 416 p. Index. Hardcover \$11.95.

When I reviewed Colin Harrison's *Field Guide to the Nests, Eggs and Nestlings of British and European Birds* (Chat 42:40), I expressed the hope that a similar volume would be published for North America. Harrison has made my wish come true, and his *Field Guide to the Nests, Eggs and Nestlings of North American Birds* is no disappointment. It contains 48 plates presenting 622 full-color photographs of eggs, 16 plates reproducing 147 full-color paintings of nestlings by Philip Burton, numerous line drawings of nests and of dorsal or head patterns of nestlings, and a very informative text.

The author properly begins by cautioning the reader against illegal collecting of nests and eggs and by offering suggestions for keeping danger to the eggs and young to a minimum while examining nests. The introduction gives background information on the various types of nesting behavior and defines terms commonly used in describing nests, eggs, and nestlings. There are three identification keys, one each for nests, eggs, and young.

The main text covers the avian species found in North America from the Arctic to the southern boundary of the United States, omitting Baja California, the Gulf of California, and the Bahamas. Species are arranged in taxonomic order, and for each the text gives nest habitat, nest site, nest construction, breeding season, eggs, incubation, nestling description, and nestling period. In many cases question marks show the author's uncertainty about the information, and in others he simply states that there is no information. The most valuable result of the publication of this guide should be an increased interest in the study of breeding birds among amateur ornithologists. Harrison makes clear the need for such studies, and he provides the basic information the bird student needs to watch a nest intelligently and to report the observations meaningfully.

The text of Colin Harrison's new guide inevitably duplicates much of the material in the birds' nests volume of the Peterson Field Guide Series (*A Field Guide to Birds' Nests*, Hal H. Harrison, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1975). The latter book contains color photographs of the nests of 285 species found breeding in the United States east of the Mississippi River. Clutches of eggs can be seen in all but nine of the nests, and end papers illustrate typical egg shapes and markings. The text gives the average size, shape, and general appearance

for the eggs of each species; but the pictures give no sense of the relative size of the eggs or nests. No attempt is made to describe the young, not even to the small extent of saying whether they are precocial or altricial. Hal Harrison's emphasis is on the general appearance of the nest with eggs in the natural setting. Colin Harrison's guide to nests, eggs, and nestlings describes and sometimes illustrates the nests, but his emphasis is on the eggs (photographed to scale) and the young. Thus the two books complement each other, and students of breeding birds will want to own both.

The publisher indicates that Colin Harrison's book is the first in a planned series of nature guides for North America. While the present offering cannot be expected to make the best-seller lists, it is an excellent book and an auspicious beginning for a formidable undertaking. If future releases are of the same caliber as the present one, Collins Publishers will provide naturalists with a rich new source of authoritative aids to identification.—EFP

RECORD REVIEW

SOUNDS OF FLORIDA'S BIRDS (ARA-5)

Narrated by John William Hardy. 1979. ARA Records, 1615 N.W. 14th Avenue, Gainesville, Florida 32605. 12-inch long-playing record. \$7.00 postpaid.

Although this record is "dedicated to the school children of Florida," it has much to offer anyone who is interested in bird sounds. The 80-odd species include many that are typical of the southeastern United States (Louisiana Heron, Least Tern, Parula Warbler) in addition to the expected Florida specialties such as the Limpkin, Mangrove Cuckoo, Gray Kingbird, Florida Scrub Jay, Black-whiskered Vireo, and the Dusky and Cape Sable Seaside Sparrows. Two surprises are the recordings of the West Indian Nighthawk and the Cuban Yellow Warbler, neither of which is mentioned in the table of contents. The Black Rail and Swainson's Warbler recordings are outstanding.

Most of the original tapes used in making this recording are from the Florida State Museum's Bioacoustic Archive. While differences in equipment and variations in field conditions are at times noticeable on the disc, both the selected tapes and the pressing are excellent. CBC members will note with interest that many of the recordings were made by David S. Lee while he was an Associate of the Florida State Museum.

Hardy is to be commended for his tasteful narration. He has a pleasant speaking voice and a manner that is authoritative but still imbued with the best qualities of friendly conversation. He offers a few basic facts about each species with appropriate additional comments on the status of the bird in Florida. In some cases he explains background sounds such as the calls of other species or the waves lapping against the side of the boat. I noted only one unfortunate omission in the narration. The Wood Stork recording was made in a nesting colony, and Hardy failed to mention that the vocalizations were those of young birds instead of adults, which do not have a functional syrinx. This one small oversight stands out because the rest of the commentary is almost flawless.

Other ARA Records include "Voices of Neotropical Birds," which contains the sounds of over 50 species ranging from Mexico to South America, and "The Wrens," which contains recordings of more than 40 of the 60 wrens known to science.—EFP