

BOOK REVIEWS

BIRD BEHAVIOR

Robert Burton. 1985. Alfred A. Knopf, New York. Illus. Index. 224 p. Hardcover, \$18.95.

This large-format book (10½ x 10½ inches) offers an overall survey of avian adaptation and behavior. It is beautifully and informatively illustrated with color photographs and occasional maps or other drawings. A 12-picture series presents the annual cycle of the European Starling, and another memorable series shows a Green-backed Heron using a fish-food pellet as a lure to catch fish. Most of the technical information reflects the current ornithological literature, though in a few cases papers published in major ornithological journals during the past 20 years have been ignored. For example, the author discusses dusting, anting, and sunbathing under the same heading and carefully avoids endorsement of the theory that birds ant to kill or dislodge feather parasites, but he does not even suggest a relationship between these three grooming behaviors and molting, which is the very next topic in Chapter 2. Burton's handling of the anting question is particularly surprising because another book by the same publisher (*Beyond the Bird Feeder* by John V. Dennis, Knopf, 1981) offers a balanced discussion of the subject. Burton also makes the statement that herons do not sunbathe, which is not true. Nonetheless, the photographs in *Bird Behavior* are so spectacular that the reader can forgive occasional slips in the generally well-prepared text. Listed among the contributing photographers are Roger Tory Peterson and CBC member Jack Dermid.—EFP

BIRDS OF THE NASHVILLE AREA

Henry E. Parmer and committee. 1985. Fourth edition. Nashville Chapter, Tennessee Ornithological Society, P.O. Box 24573, Nashville, Tenn. 37202-4573. 60 p. Softcover, \$4.

Originally compiled by the late Henry E. Parmer (1914-1985) and dedicated to him, the fourth edition of the Nashville, Tennessee, bird list was revised by a committee consisting of David F. Vogt (chairman), C. Gerald Drewry, Paul B. Hamel, and Stephen J. Stedman. The volume summarizes the occurrence of 306 species of birds in the nine-county region in and around the city of Nashville. Species accounts give the status for each season of the year and summarize nest records. Observers are cited for significant occurrences. The centerfold is a map indicating the geographic area covered and pinpointing the 27 sites described in a brief gazetteer of favorite places for bird watching. The committee added as an appendix a bar graph illustrating the period of occurrence for all 306 species. Anyone examining this book must be impressed by the large number of observers who contributed data, both published and unpublished, to the project, which is a real tribute to the ability and dedication of Nashville's amateur bird students. Groups planning to publish a local bird list would be well advised to study this one carefully while there is still time to adopt some of its best features.—EFP