

HOUSE FINCH: The species is now wintering in large numbers even in the coastal plain, as evidenced by 250+ in Aiken, S.C., on 27 January, as seen by Peter Stangel, and at least 150 in Annette Taylor's yard in Wilmington in early December.

RED CROSSBILL: The only reports outside the mountains during the winter were six south of Bolton, N.C., on 8 December (Sam Cooper) and one on the Roanoke Rapids CBC on 27 December (John Wright).

BOOK REVIEWS

FIELD GUIDE TO THE BIRDS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

Ian Sinclair. 1984. Republished 1987 by The Stephen Greene Press, Lexington, Massachusetts; distributed by Penguin Books, 40 W. 23rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10010. 5 7/8 x 8 1/4 x 1 inches. Illus. with more than 850 color photographs; range maps. Glossary. Three indexes (English common names, scientific names, Afrikaans names). 368 p. Paperback, \$14.95.

Sinclair's book has the same advantages and disadvantages common to all photo-illustrated field guides, and it is a bit too large for most jacket pockets. Nonetheless, bird watchers traveling to southern Africa will not want to leave home without it.—Eloise F. Potter

THE COLLINS FIELD GUIDE TO THE BIRDS OF EAST AFRICA

J. G. Williams and N. Arlott. 1988. The Stephen Greene Press, Lexington, Massachusetts; distributed by Penguin Books, 40 W. 23rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10010. Illus. Softcover. \$21.95

THE COLLINS FIELD GUIDE TO THE NATIONAL PARKS OF EAST AFRICA

J. G. Williams. 1988. The Stephen Greene Press, Lexington, Massachusetts; distributed by Penguin Books, 40 W. 23rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10010. Illus. Softcover. \$19.95.

The Collins Field Guides are the British equivalents to the Peterson series in this country and for years have provided helpful guides to the flora and fauna of many parts of the former British Empire. The Stephen Greene Press of Massachusetts is now co-publishing about a dozen of the Collins guides, making them more available to the increasing number of Americans

traveling abroad for birding and wildlife study. During my three-week visit to Kenya last summer, I found both of these guides indispensable for identification of birds and mammals in that part of the world.

The Field Guide to the Birds of East Africa is identical to the edition published in 1980 in Great Britain. It covers East Africa from Zimbabwe to Ethiopia and Uganda. In 415 pages, 665 species are described and illustrated in 48 color plates; descriptions of an additional 633 species are included in the text as "Allied Species." Information on each species includes body length, field marks, voice, range and habitat.

Arlott's illustrations are generally excellent and the color rendition of the plates is very good. I discovered only one error in the illustrations (the nape of the White-browed Robin Chat should be rufous rather than black) although I certainly did not check each species for accuracy. Considering the large number of birds in East Africa, the choice of which species to illustrate and which to describe in text only is a difficult one. The great majority of species that a birder would be likely to observe during a typical two-week visit to East Africa are pictured. I questioned only one omission: the Sooty Chat, which I found to be extremely common, was not illustrated. It was adequately described under the "Allied Species" heading, however, leaving no doubt about its identification.

The Field Guide to the National Parks of East Africa, also by J. G. Williams, is a useful companion to the bird guide. The text is divided into three parts. Part 1 describes, in alphabetical order, the national parks, game reserves and other faunal areas of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. Williams gives a brief description of each park, explains the different habitats each contains and highlights some of the more interesting plants, birds and mammals in the area. I found the maps and the bird and mammal checklists for each park particularly helpful. Part 2 is a field guide to the larger and more common mammals of East Africa, with five black and white and eight color plates. For each species, the total length, field marks, range, habitat, and allied species are given in the text. The coverage is sufficient to eliminate the need to carry a separate field guide to mammals, unless one is particularly interested in small insectivores and rodents. For those who wish additional detail, a field guide to African mammals is available in the Collins series. Part 3 is actually a condensed version of Williams' and Arlott's guide to East African birds and includes 16 color plates illustrating about 175 of the most common species. Any serious birder would not be satisfied with the limited number of species illustrated, but for persons who expect to do only casual birding, the coverage is probably sufficient to substitute for a separate bird guide.

Birding in East Africa is superlative. In a two-week visit, it is possible to add over 200 species to a life list without working too hard. For birders, no trip to East Africa would be complete without the Collins bird guide. The addition of the national parks guide provides useful check-lists, maps and a concise guide to the mammals of this fascinating region.—Lynn Moseley