

- NORTHERN "BULLOCK'S" ORIOLE:** This rare western form was found twice in southeastern North Carolina: a female in Richlands, Onslow County from 21-27 December (Jimi and Nell Moore) and another female in Wilmington from 4 January to March (Greg Massey). Could they have been the same bird?
- PURPLE FINCH:** This species was more widespread in the Carolinas this winter as compared to the past several years. The best count received was of 200+ in the yard of Bob Wood in Blythewood, SC all season.
- WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL:** Surprisingly, the only crossbill report this winter was of the very rare White-winged! A female appeared at a feeder in Chapel Hill, NC on 10 February (Carol Hamilton) and remained for at least three or four days. Several lucky observers got great looks as the bird fed on the deck right outside a window.
- COMMON REDPOLL:** The Common Redpoll staged a major invasion this winter into states just to the north of the Carolinas. There were several reports in our area, but nothing like in Virginia and Maryland. In North Carolina, one was at Hatteras on 27 December (Harry Armistead, et al.) and there was a report of one being banded at Southern Shores on the Outer Banks in mid January (David Leake, fide Steve Dinsmore). In South Carolina, individuals were at Spartanburg on 7 January (Jennifer Wren, Simon Thompson), Columbia on 17 and 23 January (fide Pete Worthington), near Hopkins, Richland County on 22 January (Gary Sowell, fide Robin Carter), and at Simpsonville on 11 February (Pete Worthington).
- EVENING GROSBEAK:** This species continued its invasion started during the fall. There were birds all across the Carolinas in small numbers but the largest total came from Roan Mountain on 5 December when over 200 were found (Steve Dinsmore, Susan Grove).

BOOK REVIEWS

WHITE IBIS: WETLAND WANDERER.

Keith L. Bildstein. 1993. Smithsonian Institution Press, Department 900, Blue Ridge Summit, PA 17294. Hardback, 242 pp including references and index. \$22.50.

Keith Bildstein, formerly on the faculty of Winthrop College in South Carolina and now the director of research at Hawk Mountain in Pennsylvania, has written this book describing his fifteen years of research in the life of the White Ibis at Hobcaw Barony near Georgetown, South Carolina.

I highly recommend this book to all readers of *The Chat* because it does an excellent job of describing the biology of a distinctive element of the avifauna of the Carolinas and, if this is possible, an even better job of describing how scientists actually conduct their studies. Scientists tend to be perceived as mysterious people in white coats who perform mystical activities that result in

increased knowledge about all sorts of arcane topics. Bildstein does a wonderful job of showing how it's really done with all the practical, human problems. What is even better, he makes it interesting to read.

While I thought the whole book was interesting, I was particularly intrigued by the last three chapters dealing with ibises in Trinidad, Hurricane Hugo, and conservation issues. These three chapters are particularly sobering and more than a little frightening for anyone with an interest in and concern for natural environments.—H. T. Hendrickson

A BIRD FINDING GUIDE TO ALASKA

Nick Lethaby. 1994. Published by the author, 79 Mirabelli Circle, San Jose, CA 95134. Softcover, 151 pp. \$14.95 + \$3.00 shipping and handling.

Sooner or later many birders reach that point where they want to increase the size of their life list and they just can't do it with any high degree of probability within the confines of the contiguous 48 states of the U.S.A. Clearly, there are many options open that will allow you to accomplish your goal, but most of these involve travelling to a foreign country. There are, of course, two other states that are chock full of all sorts of neat and fascinating birds that are difficult if not impossible to come by in the usual states; Hawaii and Alaska.

Nick Lethaby, a relatively recent immigrant to California from Britain, has discovered the joys of birding in Alaska and has written this concise guide on how to find those birds that are closest to the heart of the dedicated lister. The book is designed for out-of-state birders and there appears to be no other comparable guide.

In addition to the usual accounts of the prime sites to consider visiting (he lists 23) and species accounts of the North American species that a visitor is most likely to be interested in seeing (he lists one hundred forty-two), there is a list of asian vagrants with an estimation of their probability of being seen in the area around Attu.

When you contemplate the expense of living and getting around in Alaska, Lethaby is to be congratulated for spending a considerable amount of attention to the practical concerns of getting around in a state the size of the eastern U. S. and how to avoid spending more money than you have. One of the things that he stresses is the need to plan what you want to do, when to do it, and how to do it in the most efficient fashion. This book is a must for all birders intending to explore the great white north. As an added incentive to purchase this book the author will offer a \$1 discount to all members of the CBC who mention that they read about the book in *The Chat*.—H. T. Hendrickson