

BEAUTIFUL BAHAMA BIRDS: COMMON BIRDS OF THE BAHAMA ISLANDS.—Carolyn Wardle, Lynn Gape, and Predensa Moore. 2014. Bahamas National Trust and BirdsCaribbean, Nassau, Bahamas. 133 pp. ISBN: 978-976-8231-25-3. \$20.00.

This attractive, informative little guide is the most recent contribution in a series of island-specific bird guides supported by BirdsCaribbean (formerly the Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Targeting high school-aged students, beginning bird watchers, and tourists to the Bahama Islands, the guide highlights 60 common birds of the islands. With illustrations borrowed from Herb Raffaele *et al.*'s (1998) *A Guide to the Birds of the West Indies* reproduced in a very nice, large format, the book does a good job of synthesizing a general description and habitat for these species. I particularly like the book's design, with the use of large, bold fonts, and employing colors without overdoing it to the extent that a page becomes a busy mess.

But this book is more than an identification guide too. Introductory chapters in Part I address why birds are interesting to us, and curious facts about birds. A chapter relates how to identify birds, but also covers how to find a bird in your binoculars, and how to become a better birder through learning songs and calls, choosing equipment, and respecting a code of ethics. And Part I includes advice on how to make your yard more bird friendly so as to keep birds safe and coming back for your enjoyment.

Finally, *Beautiful Bahama Birds* concludes with a well-thought-out section on conserving birds. Appropriately, lands managed by the Bahamas National Trust and Important Bird Areas are highlighted not only as conservation success stories, but also as bird watching destinations. The many threats facing birds are briefly addressed, as are first steps which newly engaged bird watchers might take to help provide for birds. Finally, the book concludes with a selection of stories and poems that illustrate nicely how birds contribute to Bahamian culture.

Overall, I found *Beautiful Bahama Birds* to be a well-written and pleasingly designed book which does extremely well in providing an introduction to Bahamian birds. I would recommend it without reservations to any young person or adult interested in exploring what bird watching is all about. I would also suggest to anyone else contemplating writing a similar guide to add to the growing stable of island-specific introductions to bird watching, that they would do well to mimic the many qualities of this fine contribution to Caribbean birdlife.

### Literature Cited

Raffaele, H., J. Wiley, O. Garrido, A. Keith, and J. Raffaele. 1998. *A Guide to the Birds of the West Indies*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ.

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