

what routes birds likely take during autumn migration.

The largest group of papers, Part IV, includes eight papers on ecology, behavior and conservation. These include studies of the foraging behavior of the Trinidad Piping-Guan (*Pipile pipile*), a very interesting report of the persistence of some White-bearded Manakin (*Manacus manacus*) leks for as long as 42 years, the biology of the Band-rumped Swift (*Chaetura spinicauda*) and the Black-throated Mango (*Anthracothorax nigricollis*), and Stan Temple's use of French's compilation of life history data and a unique multiple logistic regression model to predict the relative vulnerability of birds on Trinidad and Tobago to extinction. An interesting paper by Tim Manolis and Alex Cruz presents preliminary data on the brood parasitic Shiny Cowbird (*Molothrus bonariensis*) mating systems, suggesting that cowbirds may be promiscuous where host densities are clumped, but monogamous where hosts are more uniformly distributed. Finally, in my favorite article in this section, Mykela Heath and Mike Hansell examine weaving techniques used by Yellow Oriole (*Icterus nigrogularis*) and Crested Oropendola (*Psaracolius decumanus*) in nest building. The authors present a fascinating discussion of the types of weaving stitches, trajectories of strands of building materials, and stitching and building techniques, and compare these results to those of other nest weavers.

Finally, the tribute concludes with several short communications. While these are mostly sight records, their inclusion here is appropriate, as much of Richard French's contribution to ornithology and conservation in Trinidad and Tobago was based on just this sort of careful observation and record keeping.

The editors and the University of the West Indies are to be saluted for their contribution of this fine and handsomely produced monograph, and I expect Richard French is pleased with this deserved tribute as well. The diversity of papers presented in the book provides an example of how much innovative and important ornithological work is undertaken in Trinidad and Tobago and the Caribbean in general. Now, if only the editors had thought to resolve that enduring question: what is the origin of that odd name, French?—STEVEN C. LATTA, *PRBO Conservation Science*, 7428 Redwood Blvd. Ste. 203, Novato, CA 94945, USA; e-mail: slatta@prbo.org

LITERATURE CITED

- WORTH, C. B. 1967. A naturalist in Trinidad. Philadelphia, PA: J. B. Lippincott Co. 291 pp.
- BOND, J. 1961. Birds of the West Indies. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 256 pp.
- FRENCH, R. 1973. A guide to the birds of Trinidad and Tobago. Wynnewood, PA: Livingston Publishing Company. 470 pp.

BIRDS OF THE WEST INDIES.—Herbert Raffaele, James Wiley, Orlando Garrido, Allan Keith, and Janis Raffaele. 2003. Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey. 216 pp. ISBN: 0-691-11319-X. \$24.95.

This welcome guide to the birds of the West Indies is a field version of Raffaele *et al.*'s (1998) popular *A guide to the birds of the West Indies*. Itself the successor to James Bond's (1961) *Birds of the West Indies*, Raffaele *et al.*'s 1998 book is a comprehensive guide to 564 species, including wintering and passage migrants. All species were illustrated in Raffaele *et al.*'s 1998 book, and seven special plates featured the island endemics of Cuba, Hispaniola, Jamaica, and Puerto Rico. This earlier book also

contained fairly comprehensive information on field identification, voice, nesting, and geographic range of each species. While widely hailed for its thorough treatment, it was also bemoaned for its large format, heavy weight, prohibitive cost, and especially for its notoriously bad binding which repeatedly failed to withstand even the lightest field use.

Now, Princeton University Press has released this heavily revised and redesigned book based on Raffaele *et al.*'s earlier effort. Much shorter in length, pocket-sized, and with a weather-resistant cover and solid binding, the book can truly be considered a field guide. Introductory material has been limited to brief accounts on how to use the guide, an explanation of terms used in the text, and a summary of conservation issues in the West Indies. A list of

threatened and endangered species is also provided, and while one may argue that much of this could be updated, and equivocate over which species are in which list, the point is clear that human populations and land use changes continue to have a tremendous, negative impact on the region's birds. Species accounts are now placed facing the species' illustration and are abbreviated. Included in the accounts are short descriptions of plumages, voice, status and range, and habitat. Of highest importance for identification, the plumage descriptions focus on key field marks, and while they may be sufficient for the identification of most species by experienced bird-watchers, they are probably insufficiently detailed for beginners, or to separate hard-to-identify species that may be easily confused; seldom is there any specific information on similar species. The number and quality of range maps has also been reduced. While these, too, are placed facing the plates, all but the largest islands of the Greater Antilles have been relegated to the tiniest dot of color. In addition, the useful list of common local names of each species that was found in the earlier edition has been omitted. Nevertheless, these are minor problems, and are largely necessary compromises that one must make in distilling information on 564 species of birds into a single, pocket-sized field guide.

The plates in the *Birds of the West Indies* by principal illustrators Tracy Pederson and Kristin Williams, and supporting artists Cynthia Fisher, Don Radovich, and Bart Rulon, vary in quality but are largely very well done. The special plates featuring island endemics have unfortunately been omitted to save pages, and others, such as the vireos, have been entirely repainted. We find particularly well-done many of the waterbirds, parrots and parakeets, Caprimulgids (including the nice black-and-white drawings of tail patterns), hummingbirds, and woodpeckers. The warbler plates we find particularly difficult to use, especially those of nonbreeding plumages which are incomplete and would be of most value in the region. Some plates have been reorganized from the earlier guide. With computer technologies, plates can now be disassembled and reassembled, allowing for updating, deletions, and replacements of images. This allows much flexibility in book design, but it also contributes to a certain inconsistency among plates, which can be compounded with the multiple artists involved in the project. So for example, some plates mix images by

different artists with different styles. Another occasional problem is one of distributing images among the plates. Because publishers are no longer constrained by the composition of the original work by the artist, some plates, such as the shorebirds in this guide, can be very crowded with figures, and others, such as the first plate of thrushes, can appear quite empty. Another minor detail that could actually be corrected with these technologies is that we might prefer that the guide have placed all birds on one plate facing the same direction. This allows for an easier comparison among similar species. More important in our minds is a preference that all views of any one species be on the same plate. For example, images of birds in flight are often on plates several pages away from images of the same species perched. Similarly, views of birds in breeding and non-breeding plumages are not often together, making comparisons of plumages more difficult.

Overall, we think this revised and redesigned version of the Raffaele *et al.* guide is a very well done, field-worthy book that will be carried by almost all Caribbean residents and visitors interested in bird identification. We particularly like its handy size and durability, the ease in which a species can be located in the book, and its relative affordability. Nevertheless, we still carry the more complete *A guide to the birds of the West Indies* in our vehicles as a reference. Whereas this guide is especially useful for those birdwatchers traveling among several islands, we think that there is still a need for island-specific field guides that can provide more in-depth presentations of field identification of all birds, especially very similar or easily confused species, as well as the natural history, ecology, and conservation of island birds.—STEVEN C. LATTA, *PRBO Conservation Science, 7428 Redwood Blvd. Ste. 203, Novato, CA 94945, USA; e-mail: slatta@prbo.org*; and KATE WALLACE, *Apdo. 3284, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, e-mail: cua809@yahoo.com*

LITERATURE CITED

- BOND, J. 1961. *Birds of the West Indies*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 256 pp.
- RAFFAELE, H., J. WILEY, O. GARRIDO, A. KEITH, AND J. RAFFAELE. 1998. *A guide to the birds of the West Indies*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. 511 pp.