

**The Birds of Cayman Brac and Where to Find Them, with Driving and Hiking Maps.**—Keith Prescott. 1997. National Trust for the Cayman Islands. viii + 135 pp., 20 maps. ISBN 976-8104-99-6. Paper, US\$12.00.—This handy guide is designed as a companion to Patricia E. Bradley's *Birds of the Cayman Islands* (rev. ed., 1995, Caerulea Press, Italy). Prescott, who resided in Cayman Brac for eight years (1985–1992), extensively "birded" the Brac and has produced an excellent guide based on his observations and those of other workers. After a brief introduction to the island, its birds, and general information on birding, the author presents a list of "the breeding birds of Cayman Brac," which consists of 31 species recorded as having bred there, including four species that are not confirmed as regular breeders. A chapter on the eight habitat types on the Brac includes descriptions of those environments along with lists of birds found year-round, Autumn/Winter/Spring, and as rarities. The main body (pp. 15–85) of the book consists of species accounts for 135 birds recorded from the Brac. For each of the species, Prescott provides common English (including local) and scientific names, size, description, status, and behavioral information. Aside from the fine cover photograph of a Red-legged Thrush (*Turdus plumbeus*) by Yves-Jacques Rey-Millet, none of the species is illustrated, and Prescott refers the reader to Bradley's book and the National Geographic Society's *Field guide to the birds of North America* for illustrations.

The second major section of the book consists of three well-described birding tours of the island. Prescott notes the rapid rate at which development of the Brac is progressing. This has had the negative effect of diminishing available habitat for birds, but also of providing birders with excellent access to otherwise difficult areas (e.g., the dense woodlands of the Bluff). Two of the tours focus on the upland Bluff, whereas the third visits the major hot-spots for water birds. A general map of the Brac provides overall orientation, but Prescott also provides 19 detailed maps showing access to finding birds, for which he provides exact localities for many species. For "the lighthouse loop trail tour," Prescott provides a checklist of birds for the trail and en-route. The tour section includes additional information on Brac habitats and bird ecology.

"The Cayman Brac birding year" provides month-by-month birding highlights. Three useful indexes (general/English common names, scientific names, and local names) conclude the book.

This excellent guide will (as the author notes) allow visitors and residents alike to "grab a pair of binoculars, jump into a car and with the aid of this book, see the maximum number of species present on the island in the minimum amount of time."—JAMES W. WILEY, *Grambling Cooperative Wildlife Project, P. O. Box 841, Grambling State University, Grambling, Louisiana 71345, USA.*

**A Birder's Guide to the Bahama Islands (Including Turks and Caicos).**—Anthony W. White. 1998. ABA/Lane Birdfinding Guides, Virginia Maynard, editor. June 1998. x + 302 pp. [pp. 78–79 missing], 66 maps, black-and-white line drawings, 29 color photographs of Bahama specialty birds and habitats, and black-and-white photographs. Wire-O binding. ISBN 1-878788-16-7, \$21.95 plus \$3.75 shipping.—This is the first comprehensive guide to finding birds on the islands of The Bahamas and The Turks and Caicos. Society member Anthony "Tony" White is well-qualified to produce such a guide. For over 25 years he has regularly visited the Bahamas, and now spends 6–8 months a year based at his winter home on New Providence. White provides complete descriptions of more than 150 birding sites, which guides birders to all of the major islands, numerous smaller cays, and the less developed "Family Islands." The Guide is conveniently laid out, with an inner cover table of condensed information for finding Bahama specialty birds among 13 islands and island groups. The back inner cover has a map depicting an overview of the Bahama Islands and The Turks and Caicos.

After the author's preface and acknowledgments, Sandy Sprunt provides a foreword, giving an overview of the islands' rich avifauna. Next, White provides introductory materials on the islands' geology and climate, followed by sections on travel to and within the islands, precautions, and an overview of the birdlife of the region, with specific discussions on endemic species and subspecies. The introduction also includes an important discussion of conservation in the islands. Finally, White presents general recommendations and information for birding, including advice on where and when to go, field guides and maps, and, importantly, how to report sightings. For each of the individual regions, White provides a list of recommended readings.

The major proportion of the book is taken up by the 13 detailed chapters covering islands and island groups. These chapters include orientation maps, as well as finely detailed maps which will greatly assist the user in getting around the islands and in finding specific birding sites mentioned by White in the text. In addition to detailed information on getting around in the subject island, Tony provides advice on where to stay, eat, and rent cars. Further detailed suggestions are provided for more elaborate tour routes. For each area, White lists the species one is most likely to encounter, as well as noting what rare or endemic forms might be seen. Suggested sites to bird are detailed on the maps, as well as in the text, usually with a mile-by-mile account of the route. White's comments of sites along the tour routes are not limited to birds, but also include other wildlife and points of interest to any visitor. Each of these regional chapters is further enriched with a bibliography of readings that will be of interest to visitors.

Following the regional chapters, White presents a chapter

entitled an "Annotated list of specialties," although the word "list" in the title is misleading. The chapter is much more than a list with a few annotations. It contains considerable information on each species' status, ecology, and behavior, as well as a summary of where the species is found, including exact sites. Sixty-eight species are covered, along with "Empidonax flycatchers" and "migrant warblers."

A checklist of birds of the Bahama Island and Turks and Caicos includes the species' status and a standard ABA Birding Code for 18 island regions and "Bahama waters." Hypothetical, unsuccessful, and introduced species are listed separately at the end of the chapter.

A welcome added chapter lists "Other observable wildlife (not including fishes or marine invertebrates), divided taxonomically, with distribution (including fossil records) — although insects are limited to butterflies, dragonflies, and damselflies.

White includes three appendices, the first of which provides information on reporting seabird colonies, including a presentation of techniques for estimating colony sizes of ground-nesting seabirds (after Parnell) and a sample data collection form addressed to compilers Eric Carey (Bahamas) and David Lee (USA).

Appendix B is a glossary of terms used in the book, including such useful information as local names of potent drinks. The final appendix is a comparison of common names as used in earlier (Bond, Brudenell-Bruce) field guides for the islands, along with current American Ornithologists' Union names.

A 19-page selected bibliography provides plenty of useful material for those who care to delve deeper into the region's scattered literature. The volume concludes with an index, which includes names of birds, islands, and specific sites. Most helpfully, the index is geared toward the visitor with such topics as "Accommodations" and "Airports" indexed by island. I would like to see scientific names included in the index, although this is not a fatal fault.

The book is richly illustrated with black-and-white drawings and photographs. An eight-page "photo gallery," positioned at mid-book, features color and black-and-white photographs of several of the Bahamas "specialty birds" and their habitats.

I highly recommend that any visitor to the region make use of Tony White's book as a guide to their birding adventures. Tony's guide will stimulate the casual birder to venture farther afield to some of the "less touristy" islands. Also, it should encourage those visitors to report their observations to the suggested central repository.—JAMES W. WILEY

**Natumaleza cubana.**—Carlos Wotzkow. 1998. Ediciones Universal, Miami, Florida, U. S. A. 294 pp. ISBN 0-89729-866-7. Paper. \$19.00.—Wotzkow's no-holds-barred account of Cuban environmental problems is certain to arouse controversy. The author names names and places blame on individuals and institutions for ecological problems throughout Cuba. I will avoid the heated issues and merely comment on the book's contents dealing with birds.

Until his defection from Cuba in 1992, Wotzkow was one of the most active field ornithologists in that country. In his studies of raptors and other species, he traveled widely throughout the country and gained an excellent perspective of Cuban birds and their ecosystems. He also interacted with most Cuban ornithologists, as well as many of the visiting scientists. In *Natumaleza cubana*, Wotzkow recounts many of these interactions and experiences in detailing his opinions on his country's environmental problems.

In the chapter entitled, "Cuba en datos generales," Wotzkow gives an overview of physical and biotic aspects of the island. Scattered throughout later chapters are numerous references to Cuba's birds, their problems, and considerable history of the politics and science involved with their study. The reader is led to bird topics by an index, conveniently arranged by taxa, with birds grouped under one section. Wotzkow also provides a valuable bibliography of topics covered in the book.—JAMES W. WILEY.

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#### REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE

Feathers, blood, or tissue of Eurasian Collared-Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*) are needed for research on source populations. Samples are needed from any locality in Europe, North American, and the Caribbean where this species is found. If you can help, please contact Christina M. Romagosa, Department of Wildlife Ecology and Conservation, University of Florida, P. O. Box 110430, Gainesville, Florida 32611-0430, USA (Telephone: 353-336-0838; e-mail: cmrsage@grove.ufl.edu).