

## BOOK REVIEW

A FIELD GUIDE TO HAWKS/NORTH AMERICA, by William S. Clark and illustrated by Brian K. Wheeler. Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1987. 198 pp. \$13.95.

The latest addition to the Peterson Field Guide Series, no. 35, *A Field Guide to Hawks* provides information on the raptor species occurring north of Mexico. In meeting the goal of a field guide, to provide information to distinguish taxonomic groups, the authors present text, plates, and photographs. The plates are inserted in the center of the book as in many of the other Peterson Field Guides. Introductory notes include a preface by R. T. Peterson, a section on how to identify flying raptors, and in illustration of raptor topography.

Clark provides a thorough description of plumage variation in each species centering on age, sex, subspecies, fine detail, and aberrant characteristics. For instance, the description of Red-tailed Hawk subspecies continues for four pages. The compactness of the readable descriptions abet their use in the field. A paragraph contrasting similar species and one describing flight patterns are the forte of the text. Status and distribution descriptions and accompanying range maps are current and are as detailed as a continental treatment will allow. Notes on behavior, measurements and etymology of the scientific name complete the species description.

One other aspect of the text deserves mention. A bibliography of more than 450 citations on raptor biology is included. To keep such an extensive bibliography from being overwhelming, Clark wisely included a species index subdivided by topic.

Wheeler's plates, depicting several plumages and postures, are arranged by similarly shaped species. Descriptive text is also provided with the plates. Although his portrayals of perched birds are respectable, Wheeler's depictions of in-flight cigar-shaped birds lack the artistry found in other bird field guides. I also find the colors of the plumages to be somewhat dark.

Following the text are 40 pages of 2x2 inch black and white photographs. Although many of the photos of flying birds show good characters, their small size is somewhat limiting. The section seems overexpanded by including perched bird photos and some rather marginal photos. For example, an arrow pointing to the chestnut shoulder of a Harris' Hawk seems meaningless in black and white photography. Perhaps better editing of the photo section would have reduced the price tag of this publication.

Overall, I think the newest field guide is a good purchase and would be used by any hawk-watcher. The information provided by the authors is valuable to every level of ornithologist. The use of this field guide will be enhanced if the reader can surmount the temptation to turn only to the plates and spend some time reading the text.

—Brad Andres, Department of Zoology, The Ohio State University, 1735 Neil Avenue, Columbus, Ohio, 43210.