

REVIEW

BIRDWATCHER'S GUIDE TO WILDLIFE SANCTUARIES. Jessie Kitching. 1976. Arco Publishing Company, New York. xv + 233 p., 20 black and white photos. \$8.95.

This interesting little volume describes 295 wildlife sanctuaries in the United States and Canada. The author's aim is to present useful information about "...most of the major and many of the smaller sanctuaries that will admit the public..."

The sanctuaries and refuges are listed alphabetically by state. Address and directions for reaching each sanctuary are given first, followed by a brief list of rare or endangered species that occur, and an equally brief list of common species. A brief description of the refuge is then given, usually including other biological, historical or geological points of interest, activities allowed and precautions that should be taken. Also included are the dates and authors of refuge checklists.

I assume this book was written to aid the traveler in planning a bird watching trip to any part of the country. In this regard I feel the book would have limited usefulness. Usually only 3-5 rare or endangered species are listed. These include birds on the federal endangered species list and also those that are only rare on the refuge in question. Often birds are listed that one could not expect to find at the same location in a lifetime, e.g., a Yellow-green Vireo at Silverwood Wildlife Sanctuary near San Diego or a Garganey at El Dorado Nature Center at Long Beach. At other times birds listed as rare for a refuge may be common just a few miles away. This book would not help you find these species. The list of common species is usually no more than 12 species long. It may or may not have the most characteristic birds of the area listed.

Another factor that must be mentioned is that this book does not present a complete list of sanctuaries or refuges. Very few state wildlife refuges are listed. Many state parks, national parks and national wildlife refuges are not included. Some glaring omissions are Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in Oregon and Carlsbad Caverns National Park in New Mexico, both well-known birding spots. In fact, three additional volumes this size would probably be necessary to treat all the wildlife sanctuaries in North America in this manner.

This book would probably be most valuable as a starting point for researching a cross country trip, with visiting scenic spots and sanctuaries foremost in mind, rather than seeing the most species of birds. If used in conjunction with Pettingill's bird finding guides and site guides published in *Birding* and *American Birds* it could possibly be a valuable book to add variety to birding trips. A collector of checklists will find this a most useful book, as it gives addresses for over 290 of them.

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BULLETIN BOARD

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON COWBIRD NESTLINGS

I am studying geographical variation in the gape coloration of nestling Brown-headed and Bronzed cowbirds. In some localities the rictal flanges and tomia are yellow, in other areas they are white. A preliminary report on this study will appear early in 1978 in *The Auk*. Since more information is needed, I would greatly appreciate receiving the following types of data from any location: coloration of the rictal flanges, tomia, mouth interior and eye-lids of cowbird and host nestlings