

Building a Birder's Library Revisited

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Fifteen years ago, Richard E. Webster wrote an article in *Birding* magazine titled: "Building a Birder's Library", in which he suggested titles that should be in a birder's basic library. Below are my fifty picks of books, published since 1993, that should also be in a birder's library.

WORLD

- 1) Del Hoyo, Josep et al. Editors. 1992- 2011. *Handbook of the Birds of the World*. 16 volumes. This handbook is the standard reference for all the species of the world's birds. The only drawback: each volume is \$265.00 U.S. I hope the publisher will come out with a "concise" edition that is affordable.
- 2) Dickinson, Edward C., Editor. 2003. *The Howard and Moore Complete Checklist of the Birds of the World. Third Edition*. A 4th edition is in the works (due 2010?).
- 3) Clements, James F. et al. 2007. *The Clements Checklist of Birds of the World, 6th Edition*. ABA birders use the Clements checklist, while Europeans prefer the Howard and Moore checklist. I prefer the Howard and Moore checklist because it's more annotated.

ABA AREA

- 4) Peterson, Roger Tory et al. 2008. *Peterson Field Guide to Birds of North America*. This volume covers all of North America. The eastern/western guides will be revised in the fall of 2009.
- 5) Dunn, Jon et al. Editors. 2006. *National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds of North America, 5th edition*. This guide will be divided into eastern/western guides in October 2008.
- 6) Sibley, David Allen. 2000. *The Sibley Guide to Birds*. Plus the Eastern and Western versions, 2003. If you haven't heard of the Sibley guides by now, where have you been?
- 7) Poole, A. and F. Gill Editors. 1992-2003. *The Birds of North America: Life Histories for the 21st Century*. An on-line version is available for \$42.00 U.S. per year.
- 8) Pyle, Peter. *Identification Guide to North American Birds. Part 1* (1997) *Part 2* (2008). These two volumes are designed for bird banders, but birders will find a lot of useful information in them!
- 9) American Ornithologists' Union. 1998. *Check-list of North American Birds. 7th edition*. Includes all of North America (including Hawaii, Mexico, and Mesoamerica), not just the ABA Area.

NEOTROPICAL

- 10) Erize, Francisco et al. 2006. *Birds of South America Non-Passerines: Rheas to Woodpeckers*. A good companion volume to #12 below.
- 11) Raffaele, Herbert et al. 2003. *Birds of the West Indies*. I prefer this book over the old James Bond guide for the same region.
- 12) Ridgely, Robert S. and Guy Tudor. 1989 and 1994. *The Birds of South America, Volumes 1 and 2 (Passerines)*. The long-awaited field guide version of these two volumes is due in spring 2009.
- 13) Restall, Robin et al. 2007. *Birds of Northern South America, 2 volumes*. A must have for those interested in the area covered.
- 14) Schulenberg, Thomas S., et al. 2007. *Birds of Peru*.
- 15) de la Pena, Martin R. and Maurice Rumboll. 2001. *Birds of Southern South America and Antarctica*.

16) Howell, Steve N.G. and Sophie Webb. 1995. *A Guide to the Birds of Mexico and Northern Central America*.

- 17) Garrigues, Richard and Robert Dean. 2007. *The Birds of Costa Rica*.
- 18) Ridgely, Robert S. and Paul J. Greenfield. 2001. *The Birds of Ecuador* (2 volumes). Several Neotropical bird guides have appeared on the market recently. These are the ones I have found to be the most useful.

EUROPE (and vicinity)

- 19) Svensson, Lars et al. 1999. *Birds of Europe*. This guide sets the standard that all field guides should follow! (There is a large format, hard-cover version, printed in 2000, *The Complete Guide to the Birds of Europe*, that is not a field guide.)
- 20) Porter, R.F. et al. 2004. *Birds of the Middle East*. A useful guide for the region.

AFRICA

- 21) Fry, C. Hilary et al. 1982-2004. *The Birds of Africa* (7 volumes, volumes 1 and 4 are out of print). The standard reference set for the region.
- 22) Sinclair, Ian et al. 2002. *Birds of Southern Africa*.
- 23) Stevenson, Terry and John Fanshawe. 2002. *Birds of East Africa*.
- 24) Borrow, Nik and Ron Demey. 2004. *Birds of Western Africa*. Of these three titles, I like *Birds of East Africa* the best.

AUSTRALIA, ANTARCTICA, AND TROPICAL PACIFIC

- 25) Marchant, S. et al. 1990-2005. *Handbook of Australian, New Zealand, and Antarctic Birds*. This handbook is the prime reference for the area.
- 26) Shirihi, Hadoram. 2008. *The Complete Guide to Antarctic Wildlife (2nd edition)*. This guide covers both the birds and the mammals of the Antarctic and nearby areas.
- 27) Simpson, Ken and Nicolas Day. 2004. *Field Guide to the Birds of Australia (7th edition)*.
- 28) Pizzey, Graham and Frank Knight. 2007. *The Field Guide to the Birds of Australia (8th edition)*. Both are useful guides to Australian birds.
- 29) Robertson, Hugh and Barrie Heather. 2001. *The Hand Guide to the Birds of New Zealand*. The best guide to New Zealand birds currently available.

ASIA

- 30) Rasmussen, Pamela C. and John C. Anderton. 2005. *Birds of South Asia: The Ripley Guide* (2 volumes).
- 31) Robson, Craig. 2005. *Birds of Southeast Asia*.
- 32) Grimmett, Richard et al. 1999. *Birds of India (and vicinity)*. Of the many Asian guides currently available, I like these three the best. Watch for: "Birds of East Asia" by Mark Brazil which is due in spring 2009.

MONOGRAPHS (FAMILY and SPECIES)

- 33) Monograph Series: Helm/Princeton/Yale/ Houghton Mifflin (1983 to present), Oxford (1995-2009), Princeton Photographic Guides (1997 to present). Of these three family monograph series, I prefer the Helm series.
- 34) Howell, Steve N.G. and Jon Dunn. 2007. *Peterson Reference Guides: Gulls of the Americas*. This is the first volume in a new series of reference books. Forthcoming titles include: Woodpeckers, Sparrows, and Birding by Impression.

35) Delacour, Jean et al. 2004 (2nd edition). *Curassows and Related Birds*. The artwork by Albert Earl Gilbert is outstanding!

36) O'Brien, Michael et al. 2006. *The Shorebird Guide*. A must-have for all shorebirders' libraries.

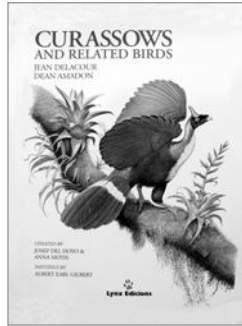
37) Peeters, Hans. 2007. *Field Guide to Owls of California and the West*. This book will also be useful for owlers in eastern USA and Canada.

38) Wheeler, Brian. 2007. *Raptors of North America: The Wheeler Guides* (Eastern and Western volumes). Of all the raptor books currently out there, these volumes are the most useful.

39) Dunn, Jon and Kimball Garrett. 1997. *A Field Guide to Warblers of North America*. The best guide to the New World warblers currently available.

40) Williamson, Sheri L. 2001. *A Field Guide to Hummingbirds of North America*. Another useful title in the Peterson field guide series.

41) Heinrich, Bernd. 2000. *Mind of the Raven*. I like Heinrich's writing



and this book is probably his best work to date.

42) Fuller, Errol. 1999. *The Great Auk*. A well-illustrated account on this extinct species.

ORNITHOLOGY/BIRDING

43) Kroodsman, Donald. 2005. *The Singing Life of Birds*. A good introduction into the biology of bird song.

44) Gill, Frank B. 2006. *Ornithology 3rd edition*. The standard textbook on ornithology.

45) Elbroch, Mark. 2001. *Bird Tracks and Sign: A Guide to North American Species*. Think of this book as a CSI for birders.

46) Baich, Paul J. and Colin J.O. Harrison. 1997 (2005). *A Guide to the Nests, Eggs, and Nestlings of North American Birds (2nd edition)*. The best currently available guide on the subject.

47) Dunne, Pete. 2006. *The Art of Pishing*. Teaches you how to "pish" in the woods.

CONSERVATION

48) Wells, Jeffrey V. 2007. *Birder's Conservation Handbook*. A useful conservation handbook for North American birders.

49) Hirschfeld, Erik editor. 2007. *Rare Birds Yearbook 2008*. Details the 189 most-threatened birds in the world.

50) Stattersfield, Alison and David Capper, senior editors. 2001. *Threatened Birds of the World*. Covers the biology and conservation of 1186 globally threatened bird species.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank the following people for reviewing an earlier draft of this article: Devorah Bennu, Dave Hutchinson and Nigel Redman.

Ian Paulsen is a longtime ABA member and an avid bird book collector. He writes a weekly on-line natural history book column called "The Birdbooker Report."



Obituaries

"Away, I'd rather sail away
Like a swan that's here and gone
A man grows older every day
It gives the world
Its saddest sound
Its saddest sound."

—Simon and Garfunkel

John Danzenbaker • 11 April 1919 – 14 July 2008

John Danzenbaker's ABA membership number was 458, joining our organization in January 1972. After a short battle with pancreatic cancer, John passed away on 14 July.

After receiving a B.S. degree from the University of Maryland, John served in the U.S. Army from 1942–1964, stationed in the United States, England, France, Japan, Korea, and Iran. He was a World War II and Korean War Veteran. He received two Purple Hearts at Normandy, retiring as a Lieutenant Colonel. From 1964–1977, John worked for the Federal Aviation Administration in Atlantic City, New Jersey.

John began birding as a teenager and as a young man he also raised pheas-

ants for a time. The war and military service interrupted this, but by the sixties he and his new family had settled down. John introduced his sons, Mike and Jim, to birding at an early age and instilled in them a deep and abiding love and respect for nature. His family will never forget the cross-country adventure to the first-ever ABA convention located in Kenmare, North Dakota, in 1973. This and John's nearly coincident retirement marked the beginning of his birding in earnest. Just a couple of decades later, John had amassed the highest New Jersey state bird list and a World List of 7,535 species, in the process accumulating passport stamps from over 70 countries.

In New Jersey, John was a birding institution and a tireless advocate of local conservation efforts. He participated in and/or compiled the Oceanville, New Jersey, Christmas Bird Count for 30 years. He volunteered for Manomet Bird Observatory, monitoring shorebirds and waterbirds at Brigantine NWR on a weekly basis, or more, for over 20 years. His red car with window-mounted spotting scope was a fixture on the dikes at the refuge.

John's legacy lives on in his wife Sylvie, and his sons John Michael (Mike), an accomplished bird photographer, and James Christian (Jim), a bird tour leader and Sales Manager for Kowa Sporting Optics.

John's presence will be greatly missed by many.