

## WHISTLING-DUCKS

*Whistling-ducks: Zoogeography, Ecology, Anatomy.* Eric G. Bolen and Michael K. Rylander. 1983. Texas Tech University Museum Special Publication No. 20, Lubbock. 67 pages. \$12.00 (paper).

The authors expressed a hope that this monograph would be useful to both evolutionary and wildlife biologists. As a wildlife biologist I feel that the 30% of the monograph dedicated to the ecology of whistling-ducks was not worth the \$12.00 price set by the Museum of Texas Tech University. The ecology of six species was covered in eight pages, leaving this reviewer with an "is that all there is?" feeling. The other two species of whistling-ducks are well covered in the comparative ecology section, which is excellent reading for waterfowl biologists not versed in this unique waterfowl group.

The zoogeography section presents some good information on the distribution of the *Dendrocygna* species; however, the authors assume the reader is well versed in geologic time periods. A geologic time chart with the distribution of the fossil members displayed would have been an excellent figure. My once-through review of their narrative presentation style did not leave me with a clear picture of the authors' view of the historical distribution of this group. An example of this confusing presentation may be seen on pages 8 and 9, which concern present distribution. The figures use scientific names only, and the narrative uses common names, without a clear connection having been made earlier in the text. A reader must compose his own list of common to scientific names while reading this section to have a clear picture of the material presented.

The 30% dedicated to anatomy was well presented and had some excellent drawings. Structural differences between the whistling-ducks that feed on land and those more aquatically oriented were pointed out and supported the authors' view on habitat separation. I would like to have seen the Bergmann's Rule section and more physiological information included in this comparative anatomy section.

A few typographical errors appear in this book that should have been caught in proofreading. On page 21 the 60 miles across the Gulf of Mexico should be 600 miles, on page 23 pari-bond should be pair-bond, and on page 28 "cultivated race fields" should be cultivated rice fields.

My overall impression is that this monograph should be in the library of all waterfowl biologists and should be recommended reading for all researchers looking for a "bird-ecology" research idea. I still have problems with the cost.

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