

A Birder's Guide to Minnesota. K. R. Eckert. 1974. Minnesota Ornithologists' Union, James Ford Bell Museum of Natural History, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis. 114 pages. \$3.75 (paper).

This work is the first bird-finding guide to Minnesota to appear since Morrison, Breckenridge and Herz revised *Where to find birds in Minnesota* in 1955. A description of Minnesota precedes a lengthy discussion of 144 of the 295 species of birds that regularly occur in the state. The author speaks to each birder personally as he tells him where and when certain pests abound and how to handle them. He stresses winter as the time to pick up Minnesota's specialties and advises the birder on methods to combat below-zero weather.

Out-of-staters, especially, will appreciate the inclusion of a highway map. The listing of mammals, reptiles and amphibians, and their approximate ranges in Minnesota, should also be well received. The promised annual updating of this guide, using material submitted by birders, is significant.

With a good, clear, double-page map of Minnesota, Mr. Eckert portrays his theme of habitat in relation to birds. He divides the state into Northwest, Southwest, Southeast and Northeast birding regions, numbering and naming the better birding areas. The remainder of the text guides the birder to 150 outstanding birding spots throughout these four areas in winter, migration and summer seasons. He concludes with two pages of names and addresses of qualified birders who will assist the visitor.

There are frequent references to the author's experiences as he leads you with explicit directions in the Northwest "from the town of Roseau to a large inaccessible spruce bog in which any boreal species is possible . . . watching especially for Great Gray Owls," to the Southwest for open country birds such as Brewer's Blackbirds, to the campus of St. John's University in the Southeast for Clark's Nutcracker and the Hoary Redpoll, to the Northeast "for the best that winter has to offer" from the White-winged Crossbill at Itasca State Park to the "big show" (fall hawk migration) at Duluth.

This reviewer accepts the necessity of constant reference to other sections for detailed directions, but would have liked a variation in type of print and less crowding of pages.

A Birder's Guide to Minnesota is recommended for use in conjunction with Green and Janssen's new *Minnesota's Birds* (to be reviewed in subsequent *Prairie Naturalist* — Ed.) and a field guide. Investigation of at least some of the areas described should spark a greater interest in Minnesota, its habitats, and its birds.

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