

## NORTH DAKOTA'S WILDLIFE

*Wildlife of the Prairie*. Wilford L. Miller. 1975. Published by the author, P.O. Box 563, Bismarck, N.D. 130 pages. \$5.95 (paper), \$8.95 (hard cover).

Bill Miller, a wildlife photographer and former editor of *North Dakota Outdoors*, has written a lavishly illustrated book on North Dakota's wildlife. Intended for students, sportsmen, and other nonprofessionals, the book should serve the average reader well.

Most of the book is devoted to accounts by species or species-group of certain mammals and birds of North Dakota. Most accounts are reasonably accurate, and the accompanying photos are a delight. Although a scientist could find many factual errors, the typical reader is not likely to be led too far astray, *except* that Miller indicates that Cooper's and sharp-shinned hawks and snowy and great horned owls are not protected in North Dakota. Recent treaties with Mexico and Japan have brought these species under federal protection. Miller could lead the pot-shooter into legal difficulty should he fire at one of these birds.

At the end of the book will be found provisional checklists of North Dakota birds, mammals, and amphibians and reptiles. The first two, at least, should be ignored, if not torn violently from the book. Miller orders the species alphabetically by common name, but does one really look for the Northern Waterthrush under "Thrush, Northern Water"? Also, what is a "Little Brown Crane"? The Peregrine Falcon is listed both under "Falcon, Peregrine" and "Hawks, Duck." Miller incorporates some of the changes made in the AOU supplement to the checklist (e.g., Common Flicker, Northern Oriole), but not all (e.g., Upland Plover remains, Snow Goose is still *Chen hyperborea*). The checklist for mammals, Erik Fritzell advises, is equally confused.

Despite the numerous technical inaccuracies, the publication is worth reading. Unlike many popular writers, Miller astutely recognizes the vital importance of *habitat* in determining what animals live where, and why there are more or fewer than there used to be. This book belongs in all school and public libraries, for certain.

Staff