

# The Blue Jay Bookshelf

**BIRGER'S BIRDS.** By Birger Roos. 1968. Golden Press, New York. \$1.50.

A tiny hard cover book containing 20 pictures in colour and each identified by common and scientific name. For example,



Barn Swallow  
*Hirundo rustica*

**AN ENVIRONMENT FIT FOR PEOPLE.** By Raymond F. Dasmann. 1968. Public Affairs Pamphlet No. 421. Public Affairs Pamphlets, 381 Park Ave. S., New York. 25 cents.

People looking for inexpensive materials on conservation to distribute among students or members of other interested groups may be interested in this little 28-page booklet. It is of course written principally for Americans, but since our problems are so similar, Mr. Dasmann's comments are also relevant for us in Canada. He writes from the viewpoint of a new definition of conservation as "rational use of the environment to achieve the highest quality of living for mankind."

Much of the discussion is concerned with the hazards facing cities, but Dr. Dasmann, who is Director of Environmental Studies for The Conservation

Foundation and has worked with universities, foundations and UNESCO on conservation problems, also recognizes the interdependent needs of urban and rural area. Soil erosion, exploitation of rangelands and forests, destruction of the marine environment, and threats to our wildlife and natural resources are all related to his broad concern.

There are rates for larger quantities, and no shipping charges on prepaid orders, thus encouraging the wider circulation of this booklet. Another title in the same Public Affairs series that might be of interest is Edward Edelson's *The battle for clean air.* —Margaret Belcher, Regina.

**A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING.** 1968. By David Munroe. CBC publication. 122 pp., 387 photographs, nine full page plates. Available from CBC Winnipeg. Price \$3.50.

"A place for everything and everything in its place," is an old saying and if some people forget this and live in a state of chaos and muddle, the opposite is true in nature's scheme for full utilization of her resources, and the proper distribution of her many and varied forms of plant and animal life.

This is well explained in the foreword of this fascinating book about Canada, which is at once a simple explanation of ecology, a travelogue from a new and exciting point of view, a gallery of fine, self-explanatory photographs, and a well-sustained plea for better understanding of Canadian wildlife in relation to human exploitation. The Arctic regions, the mountains, the eastern woodlands, the northern forests, the great plains, and the sea-girt coastal islands are all dealt with understandingly, and with great appreciation. This colorful book should go far towards bringing about a better sense of the wholeness of our far-flung country for those who, un-

able or unwilling to travel, may have ended towards a merely regional viewpoint; as well as for those who, even when they do travel, may tend to retain that regional point of view and thus make biased comparisons.

Certainly, maple groves in the glory of fall are breathtakingly beautiful; but so are great prairies at sunset, the mountains with their glittering peaks and cool, shadowed rivers, while the "blue fragrance" of which a poetess wrote can be found in the lonely land of ice-floes lit by the midnight sun. Yet all these scenes of beauty would seem lifeless, and perhaps sad, were it not for the flash of a blue jay's wing, the passing of wildfowl overhead, the whistle of a mountain marmot, or the calling of ptarmigan, not to mention the sight of even grander beasts. It may not be appreciated by many Canadians that nowhere outside of Africa are there to be seen herds of hoofed animals in numbers comparable to our barren-ground caribou in their migrating herds. All this, and much more, will be found within the pages of this volume.

Everything is in its place — but for how long?

Exploitation by man threatens many environments, and therefore many species of plants, and animals and fish; and this is brought to the reader's attention in simple and easily understood terms, to the end that each and every Canadian may pause to consider his or her personal responsibility.

The CBC is to be doubly congratulated on having produced this work; first for its clearly uttered message, and secondly for its artistic presentation of wildlife and scenery. This book should bring a new sense of identity to young readers, as well as a sense of delight to older and more sophisticated people.—*R. D. Symons, Silton.*

**MANITOBA WILDFLOWERS, 1968.**  
Manitoba Department of Mines &  
Natural Resources, Conservation Ex-

**tension Branch, Winnipeg, Manitoba.**  
25 pp., illus. in color. Free.

Although this is only a 25-page booklet, it compares very well for colour photography and layout with publications like the *National Geographic*.

The Introduction admits that this booklet is not an identification guide but a little colour introduction to the many flowers to be found in Manitoba. In addition to the beautiful photos, however, there are many small items of interest about these flowers. I was particularly interested by the little item on the Paintbrush, which we attempted to transplant last year. It promptly dried up and died. So we thought when we read the item which stated: "To flower it has to join its roots to the roots of other plants and absorb food from them," that the plant was parasitic. However, the *Audubon Nature Encyclopedia* states that it is *sometimes* parasitic, although it has a root system of its own. The 1969 issue of "Prairie Garden" has an extensive article on wildflowers. Therein it states that Paintbrush can *definitely* be transplanted, and that it will come up next spring even though it dried up immediately after being moved.—*Anthony J. Hruska, Gerald, Saskatchewan.*

**WATER. 1968. Inland Waters Branch,**  
Dept. of Energy, Mines and Resources,  
Govt. of Canada, Ottawa. 60 pp.,  
illust. Available free of charge.

The formula H<sub>2</sub>O gives a simple chemical definition of a colorless, transparent, tasteless, scentless compound of oxygen and hydrogen in liquid state, convertible by heat into steam and by cold into ice. It is also the only substance that gets lighter in weight as it turns into solid form.

However, water is not that simple or pure any more. Water such as "heavy water" and "tritiated water" have appeared. Finally, we have the hazard of "polluted water."

This booklet contains important information on water and water use. Concise explanations are given of the

hydrologic cycle of desalination, conservation, and water resources.

Because of the intrinsic importance of Canadian water a short review of the International Hydrologic Decade (IHD) is in order. On January 1, 1965 the Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization of the UN instituted a ten-year program of study and research into the fundamental principles affecting water distribution and movement throughout the world. Canada has been taking a very active part in this program. Canada is in a unique position because of its hydrologic environments which vary from Arctic, temperate, humid, to desert.

Canada has a major portion of the world's total supply of fresh water. Therefore, any program of research into the supply and movement of water would be incomplete without Canada's participation. In recognition of the scope of the proposed Canadian program, Canada was appointed to a two-year term (1965-6) as a member of the Co-ordinating Council, this term being extended later for a second two-year term.

As naturalists we are interested in conservation of our heritage. Conservation is a simple concept but very difficult to apply. Who can assign a dollar value to the flowers that grow on the side of a hill, or the birds that inhabit our marshes? True conservation must rest on a very fine balance. On the one hand there must be a balance between many different uses; on the other hand, between aesthetic values and material needs.—*Anthony J. Hruska, Gerald.*

**WHOOPING CRANES. 1969. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, Resource Publication #75. U.S. Govt. Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. Price 10 cents.**

The *Blue Jay* has tried to keep its readers informed of publications on Whooping Cranes, since these rare birds migrate throughout the Great Plains area which the journal serves. For that reason, we want to mention a little French-fold type of bulletin

that has just been published by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to give the latest information on the current status of the species. For 1968 the total of adult and young birds in the wild is given at 50, with 19 additional birds in captivity.

A summary statement of the physical character, life history, and status of the species is made, and there are accompanying black-and-white photographs and an outline map that relates the breeding and wintering grounds in Wood Buffalo National Park and the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge.

The two-year experiment (1967-1968) of removing eggs from nests in the wild for hatching at the Patuxent Research Centre in Maryland is described, and it is urged that the taking of eggs does not reduce the normal number of young of the year raised to maturity in the wild. The eggs hatched in captivity are therefore expected to increase the total crane population.

Credit is given in the bulletin to the National Audubon Society for sponsoring research and protection for the Whooping Crane.—*The Editors.*

**HINTERLAND WHO'S WHO. 1968**  
**By the Canadian Wildlife Service**  
**Queen's Printer, Ottawa.**

Under the popular title of "Hinterland Who's Who" there has just appeared a series of folder-type pamphlets published by the Canadian Wildlife Service on the Canadian fauna. We have had sent to us the following pamphlets—Bats, The Canada goose, White-tailed deer, The whooping crane, Red fox, The black bear, Herring gull, The caribou, and we assume that anyone interested can get these by writing to the Queen's Printer, Ottawa.

Each folder contains a quick sketch of the animal, with a note on range and habitat, a brief reading list, and the inevitable final paragraphs on how the Canadian Wildlife Service fits "into the national wildlife picture."—*The Editors.*