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VANISHING ANIMALS OF THE WORLD

CLIVE ROOTS and PETER KARSTEN. 1988. Hyperion Press Limited, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

The book that I'm doing this report on is called *Vanishing Animals*. It tells about different animals from all over the world that are vanishing more quickly. This book is a colouring book with pictures of the animal with a story of the animal beside it. The idea of a colouring book was great, because it makes reading it more fun. I had to do a report on mammals and this book helped me. All the information I needed about the animals was there. And all the questions I had about the animals were there too. If you are doing a report or just want to find out more about animals, birds, or reptiles, I highly recommend this book. It gave me good information on what I can do to help prevent animals from vanishing.

If you want to find more information about this book I'm sure it would be in a local book store. There are other books in this series. Here are some names: *Small Mammals*, *Large Mammals* Volumes 1 and 2, *Birds* Volumes 1 and 2, *Insects*, *Wildflowers*, *Trees*, *Time and Life* (fossils), *Fish*, *Butterflies and Moths*, *Owls of North America* and more. I really encourage you to use the books for information and fun. I found it easy to colour and understand what the author means. He or she has a good way of describing the animals. I also like the style of the author's writing. It's not too long or too short, has all the information a person would need and is easy for kids of all ages to read, understand and colour. There wasn't anything about this book that I didn't like and I enjoyed it very much. I also enjoyed *Extinct Animals of the World*.

Reviewed by *Ingrid Pederson* (age 11, Gr. 6), 23 O'Neil Crescent, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. S7N 1W7

EXTINCT ANIMALS OF THE WORLD

CLIVE ROOTS and PETER KARSTEN. 1988. Hyperion Press Limited, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

I thought this book was very interesting. Each story answered any questions you would have about the animals.

I think books like these are good. They remind people of how they are destroying the environment and killing defenceless animals.

The stories were sad because the animals' enemy was always people. This book helped me see things from their side.

I liked the pictures because they were very realistic. The one problem is that the people that would enjoy this book wouldn't be interested in colouring the pictures.

I think people my age and older would like this book. They are too old for colouring books, though. In my opinion, this would make a very good book, if it wasn't a colouring book. It should still have pictures, but already coloured like the cover picture of the quagga.

Reviewed by *Erica Pederson* (age 13, Gr. 7), 23 O'Neil Crescent, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. S7N 1W7

VENOMOUS ANIMALS OF THE WORLD

CLIVE ROOTS and PETER KARSTEN. 1988. Hyperion Press Limited, Winnipeg, Manitoba. 40 pp., paper.

This volume of the superb Wilderness Album Series (first entitled Canadian Album Series), Nature Stories for Children, does not disappoint. It follows the familiar pattern of a full page,

detailed picture to colour faced by a page with an interesting story and scientific information about each subject.

The stories are all good and at least one is a cliff hanger! My mouth was agape as I read of Black Jake, the outlaw, getting his comeuppance from a gila monster in Gila Bend in 1876.

When I read the Honey Bee story, whose central character is a six-year-old Ukrainian lad watching over the family's beehives, I was amazed at the details given of the Bee-eaters (*Merops apiaster*) which came to plunder the hives:

“Boris was sitting quietly and daydreaming when he heard a tapping sound coming from above him. He looked up. Perched on a branch just above his head was a lovely male bee-eater. It had a bee in its beak and was beating it against the branch to kill it. When it was satisfied that the bee was dead, it held it by its abdomen and squeezed it hard, at the same time rubbing it against the branch. Boris realized why the bird was doing this when he saw the venom squirt from the bee's body. Then the bee-eater swallowed the bee and flew back to the hives.”

I couldn't wait to find out more about this fascinating bird.^{1,2,3,4,5} The author has done a wonderful job of whetting the appetite for the animals presented here.

My fingers itched to get out my crayons and colour the pictures, and indeed, I did so. I am fussy and followed the description of colours given for each animal, but there is plenty of scope for “artistic licence” in these fine drawings.

The Wilderness Album Series works best as a joint parent-child activity. The adult may read the story while the child colours. Though the stories are short, they are fairly complicated; one could

not expect most young children to read them on their own. However, read aloud they are superb and provide a focus for discussion about the subject on each page. The scientific information provides help for the parent (or teacher) who will be bombarded with the inevitable questions: Where? How? Why? What? and paves the way for further research on the animals.

When I was manager of the Blue Jay Bookshop and first saw this series, I was much impressed. I have not changed my mind. Buy them for all the children on your list. Buy them for yourself!

1. AUSTIN, OLIVER L., JR. and ARTHUR SINGER. 1983. Birds of the world. Golden Press, New York.
2. BRUUN, BERTEL and ARTHUR SINGER. 1971. Birds of Europe. Golden Press, New York.
3. HEINZEL, HERMANN, RICHARD FITTER and JOHN PARSLOW. 1984. The Birds of Britain and Europe with North Africa and the Middle East. Collins, London.
4. PERRINS, DR. CHRISTOPHER M. and DR. ALEX L.A. MIDDLETON, Editors. 1985. The Encyclopedia of Birds. Equinox (Oxford) Ltd., Oxford.
5. SKUTCH, ALEXANDER F. 1976. Parent birds and their young. University of Texas Press, Austin and London.

Reviewed by *Carol Bjorklund*, 3634 McCallum Avenue, Regina, Saskatchewan. S4S 0S5

A PRAIRIE COULEE

THOMAS WILLOCK. 1990. Lone Pine Publ., Edmonton. 95 pp., illus. colour and b/w, soft cover. \$8.95.

“This little book is about ... the role of the coulee in the ecosystems of the northern plains including the landscapes of the southern portions of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta as well as much of Montana, Wyoming, North and South Dakota and Nebraska” (p. 15).

Blue Jay

The author, now a zoologist and photojournalist, grew up along the Alberta-Montana border. No one particular coulee is described but the text and illustrations mostly reflect the author's experience and knowledge of the Milk River Valley in southern Alberta and adjacent coulees.

The text contains short introductory and closing chapters and three main chapters, "Plants, the colour of the coulee," "Birds," and "Mammals." The book is beautifully illustrated with photographs taken by the author. Each photograph is briefly described and the plants and animals (including several reptiles) are identified by English and scientific names.

The book is interestingly written and it describes "bits and pieces of the life histories of selected plants and animals" (p. 16). The author recognizes the coulee as a complex community of many organisms – plants, animals and many micro-organisms. By discussing the interrelationships of some of the larger and more conspicuous organisms he has made a beginning to man's understanding of the ecology of the coulee.

The author is obviously interested in coulees, which are still largely natural and unmodified by human use and exploitation. These areas, wherever they may be, are very precious and beautiful and must be protected. The more we know about the complex relationships of the many organisms of the coulee the more we will want to preserve that ecosystem.

Willock, by writing about some of the more obvious relationships, has made a beginning. Now he, also botanists, microbiologists, and others with different backgrounds should write additional books describing other aspects of the ecology of prairie coulees. There are many avenues for study and research in the ecology of such areas.

I read the book with interest and pleasure and I hope that there will be many additional books on this and similar ecological topics. I did not look for, or expect to find, any errors, but I did notice one. Plate 18 is identified as "Silverweed" (*Potentilla anserina*) – A showy yellow-flowered cinquefoil." This is clearly an error, though one leaf of Silverweed is shown along the lower margin of the photo left of centre. Actually the photo shows some 50-70 yellow flowers of the Seaside or Creeping Buttercup (*Ranunculus cymbalaria*) which is in a different family. This species of buttercup grows in the same kind of habitat as the Silverweed.

Reviewed by *George Ledingham*, 2335 Athol Street, Regina, Saskatchewan. S4T 3G4

BUTTERFLY GARDENING — CREATING SUMMER MAGIC IN YOUR GARDEN

Xerces Society/Smithsonian Institution. 1990. Sierra Club Books, San Francisco. 192 pp. Illus. 117 colour photos and 7 paintings; paperback; (18.5 x 23.5 cm).

This is a book of 14 chapters by ten specialists. Following are some excerpts:

"Butterflies ... are like dream flowers ... broken loose from their stalks and escaped into the sunshine." *Miriam Rothschild*

"I am very concerned about what I call the extinction of experience When we lose the common wildlife in our immediate surroundings, we run the risk of becoming inured to nature's absence, blind to delight, and, eventually, alienated from the land." *Robert Pyle*

"In the United States, some 220 acres of land are lost each hour to highway and urban development Of approximately twenty thousand species of native plants in North

America, about three thousand are at risk of extinction Taking into consideration all the plants and animals in the world, some biologists estimate that there is one plant for every seven to fifteen animal species. Therefore, the loss of a plant affects the ecology of a number of animal species.” *David Northington*

“The reintroduction of natural landscape elements into urban and suburban neighbourhoods that are otherwise dominated by introduced species may be the greatest contribution to ecosystem conservation that ... [an individual] can make.” *Dennis Murphy*

“The gentle art and pleasure of gardening for butterflies is one way to light a slender candle of hope as the relentless forces of humanity disturb, fragment, homogenize, and destroy the natural habitat, snuffing out the shining lights of individual species one by one.” *Stanwyn Shetler*

“A butterfly garden is not at its best if the only goal ... is to attract hordes of butterflies. The true pleasures are memories that endure long after the butterflies have been buried under a frigid blanket of snow. An event witnessed once in a lifetime can be relived year after year as long as flowers bloom and memories endure.” *Jo Brewster*

“Examine the garden you have. Can you see it from your living room or your kitchen? ... porch? ... lawn chairs? ... Does it receive enough sun? ... do you need to move plants to provide more sun? Butterflies also need wind protection.... Gardens and gardeners develop gradually.... Small Butterfly-Garden layouts.... A pleasing native plant in one area of the country can become a menace in another – an invasive, destructive

weed.... The Master Plant List includes thirty flowering plants that butterflies use for nectar ... {including their blooming seasons and} ... represents our first choice of plants for a butterfly garden....” *Mary Booth and Melody Allen*

“But you can really abandon any romantic idea of creating a home for these angelic creatures — the best you can do is to provide them with a good pub. And like all popular wayside inns, it must have a plentiful supply of standard drinks always on tap.” *Miriam Rothschild*

“Many small blues and coppers live only a few days.... Monarchs, mourning cloaks, and many moths are adults for six to ten months.” *Dave Winter*

“We have recorded eighteen species of New England butterflies nectaring at ... the common milkweed, one of the most important of all butterfly nectar plants.... Picking a spot in a sunny but unobtrusive place in your own yard for testing various butterfly recipes is not a bad idea. Over-ripe fruit makes an excellent lure, and a simple banana mash is tough to beat.” *Jo Brewster*

“When darkness deepens ... a flashlight subdued with a filter of yellow or red plastic [may reveal] a pinhead-sized coppery glint from the hovering ... [moth’s] compound eye.” *Dave Winter*

“The rewards of butterfly watching are many and its pursuit is simple. Expenses and equipment needs are few. All you have to do is find butterflies, clear your mind, really open your eyes, and literally see what happens. I know of no better place to do it than in a butterfly garden.” *Robert Pyle*

“APPENDIX A: Nectar Plants for North American Butterflies and Moths” [More than 80 plant species found in the Prairie Provinces.]

“APPENDIX B: The Most Familiar North American Butterflies and Their Larval Food Plants” [More than 50 butterfly species found in the Prairie Provinces.]

[Some local nurseries and commercial seed dealers sell wild flower seeds. For an annotated bibliography of butterfly identification guides, please see the June 1989 *Blue Jay* (47:83-88).]

Compiled by *Bernie Gollop*, 2202 York Avenue, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. S7J 1J1

FIELD CHECKLIST OF SASKATCHEWAN BIRDS (7th edition)

Compiled by ROBERT KREBA. 1990. Saskatchewan Natural History Society, Box 4348, Regina, Saskatchewan. S4P 3W6. \$0.40 each or three for \$1.00.

This new edition of the Saskatchewan Checklist adds 23 species to the province's list since 1983. Two of these occurred as a result of splitting of the Western Grebe into two species, Western and Clark's Grebes, and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker into Yellow-bellied and Rednaped Sapsuckers. Both of these new species are fully documented in the province. Seven additional

species have been recorded and identifiable photographs or a specimen obtained: Garganey, King Eider, Mississippi Kite, Slaty-backed Gull, Black-legged Kittiwake, Black Guillemot and Hooded Warbler. Seven species formerly on the hypothetical list are now documented (Yellow-crowned Night Heron, Barrow's Goldeneye, Western Sandpiper, Band-tailed Pigeon, Mountain Chickadee, Prothonotary Warbler, and House Finch). The Eurasian Widgeon, formerly considered a documented species, has been lowered to hypothetical as the photographs have not been located. Two introduced species which have failed to maintain populations in the wild (Mule Swan and Chukar) have been deleted resulting in 349 documented species for the province.

The hypothetical list now stands at 46 with 14 new species being added (Common Eider, Bar-tailed Godwit, Purple Sandpiper, Rock Murrelet, Acadian Flycatcher, Gray Flycatcher, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Curve-billed Thrasher, White-eyed Vireo, Great-tailed Grackle and Cassin's Finch).

The checklist is graced with an excellent sketch of the Eastern Kingbird, one of our apparently rapidly disappearing neotropical migrants. The checklist appears free of typographical errors and is in my opinion an accurate list of Saskatchewan birds.

Reviewed by *Wayne Harris*, Box 414, Raymore, Saskatchewan. S0A 3J0.



A Bohemian Waxwing in England was observed to eat 390 Cotoneaster berries in 2.5 hours. *British Birds* 54, no. 1:39-41.