

the Hawaiian Flyway and the New Zealand cuckoo, *Eudynamis taitensis*); and 2 introduced species (Red-vented Bulbul, *Pycnonotus cafer*, and Rock Dove, *Columba livia*). Thirteen additional species of native land birds breed in Western Samoa, but only three land-bird species of American Samoa fail to reach Western Samoa. For each species of American Samoa, Amerson, Whistler, and Schwaner briefly summarize the habitat preference, diet, breeding biology, estimated population size, and Samoan name.

American Samoa's breeding seabirds are dominated numerically by terns, specially by the population of about 300,000 Sooty Tern (*Sterna fuscata*) on Rose Atoll. Breeding petrels and shearwaters of 4–6 species are confined to the cloud forests and montane scrub on top of Ta'u Island (possibly also on Tutuila Island). Until paleontologists have explored Samoa, one can only speculate whether the seabird colonies of the Samoan islands other than pristine Rose Atoll are just a small remnant of those that existed before Polynesians arrived, as is known to be true for the Chat-ham Islands.

Samoa's 33 breeding landbird species (lumping Western and American Samoa) are overwhelmingly derived from New Guinea, except for the robin *Petroica multicolor* from Australia. By far the most distinctive Samoan bird, and the only endemic genus, is the Tooth-billed Pigeon (*Didunculus strigirostris*), which is confined to Western Samoa. (The Samoan Wood Rail, *Pareudiastes pacificus*, was formerly placed in an endemic genus but is now considered congeneric with the San Cristobal Rail, *P. silvestris*; Olson 1975, *Wilson Bull.* 87: 1.) Besides the Tooth-billed Pigeon there are 10 other bird species endemic to Samoa, but only two of these (the starling *Aplonis atrifusca* and the honeyeater *Gymnomyza samoensis*) reach American Samoa, where the latter species is now extinct.

The distribution of Samoan kingfishers proves interesting. The White-collared Kingfisher (*Halcyon chloris*) occupies a variety of habitats on thousands of islands in an enormous geographic range from the Red Sea to Fiji and Tonga. It skips over the two islands of Western Samoa, then reappears to the east on all five main islands of American Samoa. *Mirabile dictu*, on both islands of Western Samoa dwells a similar-sized endemic kingfisher, the Flat-billed Kingfisher (*Halcyon recurvirostris*). These ranges constitute strong distributional evidence for competitive exclusion.

Regarding bird conservation in American Samoa, only one species (*Gymnomyza samoensis*) has disappeared there in modern times; it survives in Western Samoa. However, four other species (the duck *Anas superciliosa*, the pigeons *Ptilinopus perousii* and *Gallinula stairii*, and the rail *Porphyrio porphyrio*) are now rare in American Samoa, and the swiftlet *Collocalia podiopygia* is vulnerable. Some of the seabird populations also surely would be considered rare or en-

dangered if more were known about them. Compared to Hawaii, we should be grateful that the situation is not worse and that so little "enrichment" of the avifauna with exotic species has taken place in Samoa. The authors point out several areas crucial for conservation. Prime among these are American Samoa's only surviving intact coastal marsh, on Aunu'u Island, and the uninhabited southern half of Ta'u Island, which contains the mountaintop breeding colonies of petrels and shearwaters as well as what is apparently the only surviving population of the endemic Samoan race of the flycatcher *Clytorhynchus vitiensis*.

Lest readers misunderstand my account of these volumes, I should mention that they do not attempt to be a field guide to Samoan vertebrates: there are no descriptions or pictures. For bird identification, readers can instead choose among four field guides: Dick Watling's "Birds of Fiji, Tonga, and Samoa" (1982, Wellington, Millwood Press); John duPont's "South Pacific Birds" (1975, Greenville, Delaware Museum of Natural History); Ernst Mayr's "Birds of the Southwest Pacific" (1945, New York, Macmillan); and Corey and Shirley Muse's "The Birds and Birdlore of Samoa" (1982, Seattle, University of Washington Press). For the relative emphases and merits of these four guides, see my reviews in *Auk* 100: 543 and 1013 (1983). I wish that Amerson, Whistler, and Schwaner had prepared a separate paper of field observations on birds, to include information on songs, which are not discussed in the volumes under review. However, Amerson, Whistler, and Schwaner fulfilled admirably their assigned tasks of defining, inventorying, and mapping major ecosystems, identifying threatened species, and recommending wildlife management steps. For any scientist concerned with the flora or vertebrate fauna of American Samoa, these volumes now constitute the definitive summary.—JARED M. DIAMOND.

Wading birds of the world.—Eric and Richard Soothill. 1982. Poole, Dorset, England, Blandford Press. 334 pp. 96 color plates, 72 line drawings. \$29.95.—Books summarizing our knowledge of various bird taxa have secure and in many cases honored places on the bookshelves of ornithologists, naturalists, and birders. In this example, a father-and-son team has set out to summarize information on birds that wade in water. At least this is what I infer they had set out to do, as they fail to reveal their intentions explicitly, or to describe their desired audience. The introduction, to which a prospective reader might first turn for guidance, is primarily a defense of what is omitted, along with a few obligatory words on conservation. A defense of their omission of jacanas (a penalty for standing on lily pads instead of in the water) takes up 10% of the introduction. A discussion

of why phalaropes are included is allocated equal space.

The authors define wading birds broadly "... as all birds which actually do wade at some time of year, especially in their search for food." The authors' definition of "wading birds," although unevenly executed, is understandable in view of the publisher's search for the widest possible audience. It seems that the intercontinental struggle over propriety rights for the term remains under an armed truce. North Americans claim their inalienable right to use it for long-legged waders, while Europeans, needing only to contend with *the heron*, *the bittern*, *the stork*, and *the spoonbill*, find it more useful for their lot of short-legged waders. Thus the present authors are free to use the term as they see fit. The authors note that they include "... several families from the order Ciconiiformes and Gruiformes along with those of the order Charadriiformes." In that every ciconiiform family is included, this statement seems to reveal a special interest in shorebirds, the species accounts for which seem generally more extensive and complete. They have chosen to include accounts of 307 herons, storks, ibises, spoonbills, flamingos, cranes, limpkin, sunbittern, avocets, painted snipes, plovers, oystercatchers, sandpipers, crab plover, thick knees, a couple of coursers, and phalaropes.

Having delineated the book's coverage, I find it more difficult to define its character. It is not a definitive bird-taxa book, as it is incomprehensive, nor is it a field guide, as only about one-third of the species are illustrated in color. The format suggests a reference, but it is clearly tertiary, supported by a bibliography of only 35 secondary references. It is not a citable reference, and for definitive information one would need to turn to the faunistic works or to taxa monographs such as Hancock and Elliott's "Hérons of the world" (London Editions Ltd., 1978), Walkinshaw's "Cranes of the world" (Winchester Press, 1973), or Johnsgard's "The plovers, sandpipers, and snipes of the world" (University of Nebraska Press, 1983).

Unfortunately, the breadth of the book inhibits its depth. The species accounts begin immediately after the introduction. There are no introductory sections on the character, habits, habitats, or behavior of wading birds, nor is there an index. The full species accounts consist of paragraphs covering a species' description, characteristics and behavior, habitat, food, voice, display, breeding, and distribution. Fewer than half of the accounts are this complete, however; the rest include only two paragraphs covering the species description and its habitat and distribution. The descriptions are thorough but un compelling reading—the style is semi-telegraphic. Information in other sections appears to depend on the contents of the secondary sources used, none of which are cited in text. Material that is included is competently summarized, and the authors have found snatches of in-

formation not widely known. Thus, the text is broadly correct but not infrequently misleading in its generalizations or omissions. To state that the display of the Great Egret is not fully documented overlooks several very thorough studies. Similarly, to state that the display of the Cattle Egret is "not recorded" slights this well-studied species. What was meant, perhaps, is that the displays were not described in the reference books consulted.

The 96 color photographs are attractive portraits of 98 species. Half of the photographs are by Eric Hosking; one-third are by the senior author. A few poor choices, such as a Boat-billed Heron with a protruding lower mandible, mar the series. Seventy-two line drawings depict subjects ranging from Royal Spoonbills at their nests to the tail feathers of an African snipe.

"Wading birds of the world" is well produced, having clear printing, strong binding, and pleasant composition, and an important-looking cover. It would look good on the coffee table, with its dust cover on, or on the bookshelf, with its dust cover off. As a popularized reference it is quite adequate for those wishing an introduction to a specific species before seeking out more definitive information elsewhere. It might be particularly useful to those without ready access to the primary literature or secondary monographs. Even those knowledgeable about these particular birds will, in an initial browse, unearth a few new tidbits. It might be well received in public libraries and could make an acceptable gift for a well-chosen recipient, but it cannot be regarded as an essential text for either the professional or for the institutional library.—JAMES A. KUSHLAN.

Birds of prey of southern Africa.—Peter Steyn; illustrated by Graeme Arnott. 1982. Cape Town and Johannesburg, David Philip Publisher (Pty) Ltd. (published in 1983 in the United States by Tanager Books, Washington Street, Dover, New Hampshire 03820, and in the United Kingdom by Croom Helm, Beckenham, Kent). xxiii + 309 pp. 24 Plates, numerous maps, black-and-white sketches and black-and-white photographs. ISBN 0-908396-64-3 (Tanager Books, ISBN 0-88072-025-5; Croom Helm, ISBN 0-7099-2382-1). \$39.50.—This comprehensive, informative guide to the birds of prey of southern Africa aids the birdwatcher with identification, outlines the present distribution and status of southern African raptors, and gives an account of their life histories. Printed with easy-to-read type on good-quality paper and with a sturdy binding, this compact book of 17 × 24.5 × 2.2 cm is a handy reference for anyone interested in field work. It deals with 68 species of vultures, hawks, eagles, and falcons and 12 species of owls that occur in southern Africa south of the Cunene, Okavango, and Zambezi rivers in Namibia,