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***Birds of Zion National Park and vicinity* by Roland H. Wauer**

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BOOK REVIEW

Birds of Zion National Park and Vicinity.
Roland H. Wauer. Utah State University Press, Logan, UT 84322-7800. 1997. \$14.95, softcover.

Birds of Zion National Park and Vicinity is a revised edition of the booklet by the same name published in 1965 by Roland Wauer and Dennis L. Carter. Whereas the first edition contained references to 233 bird species, this new version contains an annotated list of 252 fully accepted species plus another 35 not fully verified.

While retaining Howard Rollin's colorful full-page paintings of birds associated with 4 of Zion's principal bird communities, this edition is enhanced by 34 pen-and-ink sketches of birds by Mimi Hoopé Wolf. Eight color photographs characterize typical Zion National Park scenery, although a picture of the Virgin River with associated vegetation would have been preferable to the one depicting a riparian community where no water is visible.

The book is appropriately dedicated to Jerome Gifford, who kept volumes of meticulous records of all birds in the vicinity of Zion National Park for a number of years. There is hardly a notation to any bird listed therein without some reference to his records. Unfortunately, Jerome died in 1988 before his records could be published. As Dr. William Behle mentioned in the book's foreword, Mr. Wauer "has very successfully incorporated all of Jerome's outstanding records into this new book."

A useful map of the park and surrounding vicinity at the beginning of the book shows numbered locations to which the reader can refer when visualizing where any given bird can be observed. This is especially important to a visiting birder inasmuch as many of these sites can be reached only by trails shown on the map. Locations such as Carpenter Hill, Maloney Hill, and Grafton are referred to as places to find Band-tailed Pigeons, Bushtits, and Song Sparrows, respectively. However, it

is somewhat disconcerting to discover that these locations are not listed on the map. When referring to the map, the reader, or visiting birder, must understand that lacustrine habitats such as Kolob Reservoir, Blue Springs Lake, and Grafton Ponds are located outside the park boundaries. Yet many significant sightings, especially of shorebirds, have occurred at these sites and are referenced in the book as part of the park's "vicinity." In addition, Grafton Ponds are actually water treatment ponds that are fenced and generally inaccessible to the general public, a fact not mentioned by the author. (Jerome had a key to the gate.)

One of the most worthwhile contributions by the author is that he lists resident and migratory birds by the habitat in which they are most likely to be found, and then indicates the best time of year for observing them. If the visitor is limited for time and wishes to maximize the birding experience, this information is invaluable; i.e., "More birds may be found . . . in the late spring and early summer than at any other time of the year."

It is gratifying to note that Mr. Wauer has utilized the extensive information gathered from 25 Christmas bird counts (CBCs) in the park; this writer was privileged to participate in many of them. With only 1 exception (Steller's Jay), high and low numbers are listed for each species observed on the CBC as well as the number of years any given species has occurred. It is this attention to detail that makes this much more than just a dust-gathering book for the library shelf.

The following statements regarding species abundance are instructive: "This is the most commonly seen owl in the Zion Park area" (Great Horned Owl). "This is one of Zion's most characteristic summer birds" (White-throated Swift). "This is one of Zion's most characteristic birds" (Western Wood Pewee). "No other bird is so representative of the Zion Park area" (Canyon Wren). "This is one of the park's most wide-ranging songbirds and is present at all

elevations and habitats" (Solitary Vireo). "This is one of Zion Canyon's most numerous and obvious songbirds in summer" (Black-headed Grosbeak).

In addition to Jerome's records and the CBC data, the author gained firsthand experience by banding almost 6000 birds during the more than 3 yr he spent in the park. Many sightings of the birds of Zion, and for that matter southern Utah, are the results of Mr. Wauer's commitment to keeping complete and accurate records. In addition, he utilized nesting records from various observers including his own. An outstanding contribution of this

book is that it demonstrates the importance of keeping complete and accurate records.

Birds of Zion National Park and Vicinity has contributed significantly to our understanding of the distribution and abundance of bird species within and around one of the most beautiful national parks in this country. The author is to be commended for his efforts in making this information available.

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