



## RECENT LITERATURE

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### BOOK REVIEWS

#### **A Season on the Wind: Inside the World of Spring Migration**

Kenn Kaufman. 2019. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company, New York, NY. 288 pages. ISBN 9781328566423. \$26.00 (Hardcover).

Kenn Kaufman is known for thoughtful writing that puts words to what many who are enthralled by birds feel, and *A Season on the Wind: Inside the World of Spring Migration* is no exception. Kaufman paints beautiful pictures of bird migration from the perspective of the birds, taking a deep dive into the power of regional conservation action, and spending time reveling in the joy that is bird migration from the perspective of us, the people who pursue it, who enumerate it, and who sit at our computers and watch the radar hoping for birds. Kaufman highlights that migration is not just beautiful little warblers flitting through the trees in spring, it is also crows moving in February, and it is Blue Jays (*Cyanocitta cristata*) and Bald Eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) on the move before we realize migration has begun. He paints in vivid pictures the intensity of the challenges that these birds face: born in a place where they cannot survive the winter, they must migrate to another continent and back before having a chance to raise young of their own. This book is about the science of migration, it is about shining a light on where we have been, and what we have lost. It is also about how even though these birds connect countries and continents each year, even though they are a shared moving, living resource among so many people, conservation work in a place like northwest Ohio can have a huge impact locally and across the annual cycle.

Kaufman, as in many of his other writings, brings together the birds, and the people who love them, in a way that celebrates the science, and the joy, as both are important.

He speaks thoughtfully about the importance of birds to the ecosystem, and to people, and makes the argument for why the people who enjoy birds should not look or have the same life experiences as those who have in the past. Throughout many of Kaufman's writings, including this book, you will find the importance of the people highlighted. In this book, Kaufman brings together his lifetime of bird observation and migration with the people who enjoy and study them in several moments of self-reflection on his relationship with the natural world, and the conservation community, while also making strong connections between the birds he loves and threats to their and our future.

The structure of the book takes us on several parallel journeys, switching from chapter to chapter from the science of bird migration, to stories of regional conservation efforts, and to the history of wetland conservation in northwestern Ohio. Early in the book, I found some of the chapter transitions abrupt, but, as the book progressed, it became more and more clear that the story of bird migration involves all these things. The story of migration is the story of people, those who study it, those who enjoy it, and those who work to ensure that future generations will witness it.

Often, when we hear of people doing conservation work, we hear the same names over and over, and often hear of folks who work for prestigious institutions, or those who work at national or international scales. Kaufman takes the time to shine a light on examples of how local work is powerful, and how it can get a whole region of a state excited about birds, from radio DJs to weathercasters, to Chambers of Commerce. Chapters detailing ongoing work to ensure that wind power along Lake Erie is done in a way that will not impact birds are compelling examples of the long, thankless work that is done by local conservation groups, and the tenacity it takes.

This book is a mixture of several stories that could be read enjoyably a chapter at a time, with each chapter telling its own unique piece of the story of migration in northwestern Ohio. Kenn Kaufman also narrates the audiobook, which is an enjoyable listen. I can see this book joining many others that challenge each of us to see each bird with wonder, and to embrace the human aspect of our work, even when it is challenging, for the betterment of our own communities and to help the birds that we all enjoy. *A Season on the Wind* is a book full of wonder at the spectacle and nuance of migration, something that Kaufman has clearly not lost, and he hopes we do not either.

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doi: 10.1111/jof.12317

### Effects of Climate Change on Birds

Peter O. Dunn and Anders Pape Møller (eds.), 2nd ed. 2019. Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK. 288 pages, 48 images (15 in color). ISBN 9780198824268. \$100 (Hardcover). Also available as an e-book

More research on the effects of climate change has been dedicated to birds than to any other group of animals. It may, then, be surprising how few synthetic works exist that compile what we know so far. To be sure, excellent books are available on the subject—prominent examples include *Birds and Climate Change: Impacts and Conservation Responses* (Pearce-Higgins and Green 2014), *Winged Sentinels: Birds and Climate Change* (Wormworth and Sekercioglu 2011), and several works on specialized topics. The aforementioned books are syntheses by individual ornithologists; to my knowledge, the first edited volume to bring a large group of experts together was *Birds and Climate Change* (Møller

et al. 2004), followed by *Effects of Climate Change on Birds* (Møller et al. 2010).

Now, the latter volume has been updated in an outstanding second edition under the same title, with a partial change in editors (Dunn and Møller). In the introductory pages, the editors state, “This new edition attempts to synthesize what is known about the effects of climate change on birds, as well as point out new methods and areas for future research.” This is no easy task, given the sheer volume of research. The editors calculate that there are now more than 11,400 papers on birds and climate change, with more than 7500 published after their volume’s first edition. To their credit, they have met this challenge with remarkable efficiency—this is a relatively small and digestible book.

The first edition of this work has been an important resource for research and education over the past decade, and given the need for integrative understandings of the multiple aspects of climate change biology, this new and improved edition is very timely. At the broadest level, its organization has not changed—it includes an introductory section with a chapter on climate change, that is, for the most part, without reference to birds, a section (five chapters) on methods for studying the effects of climate change on birds, and two large sections summarizing the current state of knowledge about the observed and predicted effects of climate change on birds at the population level (six chapters) and the interspecific level (five chapters).

In the first section, Chapter 2 provides a solid and up-to-date background on climate change science and, of course, how and why climate has changed and will change. Written by two authorities on the subject (Trenberth and Hurrell), it clearly and concisely reviews several topics many ornithologists may not be familiar with, and that impact birds, such as the multiple modes of global climate oscillation and observed changes thereof. However, connections between strictly climatological phenomena and animal populations are not pointed out in this chapter and, in fact, several topics discussed here are not mentioned again in the book. This disconnect was an early criticism of the first edition (Tingley 2011) and, although it may be a minor