

ORNITHOLOGICAL LITERATURE

The Bird Almanac: A Guide to Essential Facts and Figures of the World's Birds. — David M. Bird. 2004. Firefly Books, Buffalo, NY. xx + 460 pp., ISBN 1-55297-925-3. If you are looking for a great reference book on birds that does not take up much shelf space or puts too much of a hole in your wallet, then you need to consider this fine little book. It is full of tidbits that will amaze, entertain, and educate. For example, it contains information on the fossil history of birds, anatomy and physiology, flight, reproduction, longevity, conservation, and attracting birds to backyards and feeders, to mention just a few topics.

Have you ever wondered who has received the major ornithological awards? What teams and individuals have won the major birding competitions? Who are the bird-watching record holders? What are the ornithological societies of the world? Do birds smell? How can sea birds survive in such a salty environment? These are just a few of the questions that are answered in this fine volume.

The book is also full of informative lists. For example, it contains lists of bird courses and volunteer opportunities, companies that make and repair optical equipment, birding trails in North America, birding hotspots of the world, bird touring companies, birding festivals in the United States, and much much more. The 24 page glossary is concise and thorough, and the book ends with an indexed checklist of birds of the world. I recommend it for your library. — TMH