I found impressive. Thirty-three early illustrations add to the interest and attractiveness of the book.

For each observation, the name of the current Nebraska county is provided in upper case letters: “shouting” in modern computer parlance and to me a bit annoying. Unlike Robert E. Stewart’s North Dakota book, Ducey does not provide a map showing the location of each county, forcing the reader to provide himself with a Nebraska state map before reading very far.

Before listing the shortcomings of Chapter 5, the last half of the book, I chose to use Myron Swenk’s historical articles in Nebraska Bird Review (in the late 1930s) as a veracity check. I was not too surprised to find that Swenk had, in the late 1930s, provided more detail and better documentation than Ducey. If one takes the Lewis and Clark expedition as an example, Swenk used a not excessive seven pages, including a map showing the progress day by day, consulted original, primary sources, and gave more detail about extant diaries of several members of the expedition. As a further check, I compared the four-plus pages of Nebraska citations in Gollop’s Eskimo Curlew monograph with Ducey’s account, which again was less complete.

Chapter 5, a List of Species, occupies 110 pages; it lists excavated faunal remains from various forts and Indian camps, and is a useful compilation that leads the reader to original sources. Sadly, Ducey fails to place the verbatim accounts of each species in the explorer’s words, indicated by quotation marks or a different font. As a result, one can rarely differentiate fact from Ducey’s speculation, extrapolation, and “best guesses.” His terminology and presentation are inconsistent, especially concerning whether an individual species is a migrant or a resident, and whether or not there is specific evidence of breeding. His use of “migratory species” is a less satisfactory term than “migrant.” Far too often, the term “potential breeder” is used without evidence of dates or localities for eggs or young. Clearly, a conventional publishing house would have provided the outside editorial assistance that this book lacks. The index is incomplete.

In spite of my caveats, especially the idiosyncratic presentation of the species list, anyone interested in the history of ornithology in Nebraska will find much of interest in this inexpensive book.

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MISCELLANEOUS

The Emperor of Nature: Charles-Lucien Bonaparte and his World


Patricia Tyson Stroud deserves the highest commendation for this superb biography. She has dug deeply into a virtual treasure trove of European and American archival sources, including unpublished letters in the possession of the Bonaparte family. She has unearthed numerous illustrations of people and places. She details the exceedingly complicated relationships, intrigues, and political machinations within this royal family.

The first chapter of this book reads like an opera plot. Charles-Lucien Bonaparte, the nephew of Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte, enjoyed the wealth and prestige accorded royalty, but, as will be seen, suffered as much inconvenience as benefit. When Charles-Lucien was only seven, his parents chartered an American ship to take them to the United States with their retinue of 46, including 30 servants. They put in to a port in British-held Sardinia in a storm, were taken captive, sent to England and kept under virtual house arrest for four years until Charles-Lucien’s uncle, the Emperor Napoleon, was defeated, exiled, and sent to Elba. Since Charles-Lucien’s uncle Joseph, the former King of Spain and of Naples, had no sons, he wished to marry two of his daughters to sons of two of his brothers, in the hopes of reviving the Napoleonic succession. Thus Charles-Lucien was married to a first cousin, Zenaide, whom he had not previously met. They spent their honeymoon visiting natural history museums in Frankfurt, Munich, and Milan.

Charles-Lucien arrived in the United States in September 1823 as a brash 20-year-old naturalist, “spirited, dashing, mettle-some and fiery.” The young couple settled not far from Philadelphia near Joseph Bonaparte, the bride’s father and the groom’s uncle. Two of their children were born in the United States (but they had another ten, the last born in 1843). In Philadelphia, Charles-Lucien joined the American Philosophical Society and the Academy of Natural Sciences. Later dubbed by T. S. Palmer as “the father of descriptive ornithology in America,” Charles-Lucien Bonaparte “laid the foundations for the study of nomenclature,” as Witmer Stone put it. Through intensive study of the descriptions in and those made after publication of Alexander Wilson’s nine-volume, 1814-1819 American Ornithology, Charles-Lucien published five instalments of “Observations on the nomenclature of Wilson’s Ornithology,” calling attention to the errors and omissions in Wilson. This gained him the enmity of George
John Keast Lord: Materials for a Life


John Keast Lord, a veterinary surgeon, was one “of many-sided men of action so characteristic of the Victorian age.” He was the naturalist on the British North American Boundary Commission from 1858 to 1862. He arrived at Esquimalt in 12 July 1858, visited Victoria, Nanaimo, and Beaver Cove on Vancouver Island, and then moved east from the mouth of the Fraser River to Sumas Prairie. In 1859 he collected specimens near and east of present Chilliwack. In 1860, he led a risky journey from Stockton, California, overland to Walla Walla and then Kettle Falls on the Columbia River, to deliver needed mules and bullocks. By April 1862, the 49th parallel had been cleared and completed to the Rocky Mountains; Lord sailed from Victoria back to his native England.