

in numbers of Ravens, Cardinals and Canada Geese, nor is the drop in Evening Grosbeaks and Brown Creepers noted.

The long list of vagrants (147) serves as a useful point of reference for incidences of confusion, and highlights how parts of Canada are blessed by an array of species during the migration season. Images could have been useful in this section, but would have increased the size of book further, and you can always look up these species online or in other guides. The comprehensive glossary that completes *Birds of Canada* is highly valuable to beginners. The index could have benefited from being split into common and scientific names.

Bulky, weighty and at times awkward to negotiate, I feel that this book is of no use in the field (despite the fact that it is lighter than *Birds of Ecuador*, which covers some 1600 species!). *Birds of Canada* however does serve as the perfect reference to leave at home and cross check against other field guides, which usually cover both the USA and Canada. Containing beautiful close-up's for identification in addition to photos of the birds in their natural habitat, I think that this book is of particular use to families and individuals developing an interest in bird watching, and is probably less valuable to those that can already describe themselves as "birders".

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The Birds of Dalian: With Special Focus on Jinshitan National Holiday Resort

By T. Beeke. 2010. Bing Long Books. 180 pages. 98 Yuan (RMB). Available from the author (jinshitanbirding@yahoo.ca)

Naturalists worldwide play a great role in the documentation and conservation of species and habitats. This book presents us with such an heroic effort by a skilled naturalist. The Canadian author T. Beeke from British Columbia and living in China for over 6 years has just published a valuable and professional book documenting the avian diversity of a global birding spot: Dalian, located at the Northeastern Yellow Sea. As this nice little field guide shows, the Dalian region is home to c. 400 bird species, and of interest to birders year round (nesting season, fall and spring migrations, as well as a wintering ground). All of the featured species get described with three locally taken photos (usually in flight, perching and zoomed-in), with a descriptive text, and also showing the occurrence and species status in the area.

Besides its ice-free port, Dalian is also known for its Holiday Resort which has attracted tourists for decades. Bird sightings from adjacent areas and huge wetlands such as Lushun, Pikou, Zhuanghe, Wafangdian and Dandong are also included in this book. The current speed of development and contamination in China, and specifically in this region, is (literally) breathtaking: crucial nesting and stop-over habitats simply disappear within less than a year, and in front of the birder's eye! The devastating effects of a ruthless Global Economic Growth become obvious again. Another feature that makes Dalian known to birders is its species diversity, and the abundance of many migratory shorebirds; e.g., from Russia and Australia. Further, several international Arctic (!) gulls can be found wintering in the region (Vega Gull, Heuglin's Gull, Glaucous Gull).

The book is nice to read and does not claim to be a scientific treatise: instead it is designed for the beginner and even for interested school kids. Birders new

to the area (and to the Chinese landscape) will benefit greatly from the four opening pages dealing with "Areas to look for birds: Forested Mountains, Coastal Mudflats, Agricultural Areas, Lakes, Ponds and Rivers". Among the over 180 species covered are for instance the beautiful Chinese cranes, egrets, raptors, warblers, flycatchers, thrushes, shrikes, buntings and the confusing warblers and pipits. Because up to 400 species occur in the area, a few more relevant species can probably be added to the book, and will make it into the next edition then (e.g., Coots, several Owls, Pied Harrier, Black Stork, Marsh Sandpiper, Siberian Ruby-throat). But the endangered species such as Chinese Egret, Black-faced Spoonbill and Chinese Hill Warbler are also well featured by the author. The three page index of common English names proves helpful in the field (the author followed his own taxonomy).

"This book was put together with the goal of inspiring people to notice the birds around them". It's nice to learn that the locally involved author plans eventually for a Chinese (Mandarin) version of this neat book, and so that the local community can better appreciate its own natural wealth, and before it is all too late, over-developed and destroyed. So many of the formerly healthy and diverse landscapes in China are already widely impoverished and now lack their original set up: Huge regions are just dominated by domestic chicken, magpies, tree sparrows and common pheasants. In times of a massive globalization, the Dalian region and its precious biodiversity and documentation provided by an international Naturalist deserves our attention, support and protection.

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