

tory Society for reasonable cost. If you take a photo booth shot of yourself plus a glue stick to Austria, you can get a multi-day pass to Vienna's excellent public transit; a most economical way to travel.

All in all this is a great and useful book. My next trips are to Halifax and then Anchorage, but neither of these is included by the author. However, I look forward to using it on my next trip to one of the cities in

### Marshes: The Disappearing Edens

By W. Burt. 2007. Yale University Press, P.O. Box 209040 New Haven, Connecticut 06520-9040 USA. 192 pages. U.S. 35.00 Cloth.

William Burt has a very deserved reputation. His photographs are amazing. As a naturalist who also takes photos I have some idea of the skill and the patience needed to get a good shot. Burt goes beyond good. Not only are the photos amazing in their quality, but he specialises in birds that are typically difficult to see! Take Black Rail as an example. I spent several hours at night wading in a swamp with an ardent group of seekers before I had my first glimpse of a Black Rail. It ran over my foot. It took another hour to actually get my binoculars [and flashlight] on one of the cute but elusive beasts. The idea of a photograph never entered my head. I do have some slides of other rail species I took mostly by good luck. They are nice, but they are not artistic and they all have little flaws. Burt's photos are technically crisp and clear. They are also artistic; the kind you would frame and hang on the wall.

In addition to birds, the author has also included a number of pictures of marsh vegetation and some of the more picturesque flowers. Actually this book is over 50% photographs.

Once you have finished drooling over the illustrations you could read the text. The author describes his visits to wetlands throughout North America. Starting with his home base in Connecticut river marshes he travels to Maryland (Elliot Island), Manitoba (Sewall Lake), Saskatchewan (Crane Lake), Oregon (Malheur) and California (Klamath). He also takes us on a trip

this book, which will likely be Moscow. I would encourage Paul Milne to travel more in North and South America. Then I can hope he plans a second volume to cover some of the cities he has missed.

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through wetlands in Texas, Louisiana, Florida and Virginia. At each site he describes the value that each place brings and some of the issues it now faces.

Burt make an emotional, almost poetic appeal for marshes. He describes his favourite haunts along the east coast of the United States with such verve that I realised, somewhat for the first, that I too had experienced the same feelings. I tend to look at life more clinically, but Burt is more passionate and has shown that I have similar emotions to him below the surface.

I believe you should learn something new every day. I began to learn as soon as I started to read. For the first time I properly understand the issue with *Phragmites*. The ones I see are more likely the aggressive – and therefore dangerous – European plant and not the look-alike native version. Alien invaders are a key threat and *Phragmites* and loosestrife lead that charge.

His description of the work of the photographers Walter Finley and Herman Bohlman in the 1800s is enlightening on the persistence and dedication of these pioneers plus their resounding contribution to conservation.

This a lovely book and would make a wonderful present for both naturalists and non-naturalists. The beautiful writing style and powerful messages might even convert some folks to be conservationists.

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