

normally produce beautiful, crystal clear copies, I contacted them. It appears this was an isolated incident; however, you should check the particular copy you intend to buy. Lynx sent me another, perfect copy.

This will be of greatest use to non-professional avid birders who lack formal training. You can quickly resolve the occurrence of melanin, the nature of remiges, the difference between granivorous and graminivorous, mimesis and mimicry and other sources of

confusion. This book would have rapidly ended my last bird-term argument — the meaning of leucism — if I had had it handy. It may not be as valuable to professionals, but I think they will likely find it useful too. Buy this one for yourself!

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## Pioneering Women in Plant Pathology

Edited by Jean Beagle Ristaino. 2008. The American Phytopathological Society, 3340 Pilot Knob Road, St. Paul, Minnesota, U.S.A. 339 pages. 89.00 USD Cloth.

As seen by one woman, an M.Sc. graduate in plant pathology from the mid-1970s, it would appear that women scientists in this field are rapidly proving their abilities to shine with accomplishment in what was once an all male profession; moving from being seen as pretty women hobbyists picking wild flowers to serious taxonomists of vascular and non-vascular plants, many of which are plant pathogens. Agriculture has itself moved from its primitive beginnings of slash and burn to a precise science of food production in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

As the possibility that a woman may progress from a mere technician and housekeeper of the laboratory to the more stellar role of research scientist has improved, their research results have proved their abilities. The first woman plant pathologist, hired by the United States Department of Agriculture, was Effie A. Southworth, in 1887. Her most significant contribution was the description of the pathogen *Colletotrichum gossypii*, the cause of anthracnose on cotton, and the recommendation of measures of control of this disease. In 1895, Flora W. Patterson became the first woman mycologist at United States Department of Agriculture. She is remembered for the development of the U.S. National Fungus Collections, which are still of importance to mycologists and plant pathologists today. She also was very involved with the inspection of imported materials for invasive fungal pathogens, and intercepted the dangerous potato wart disease before it was imported into the United States for the first time. Another woman of importance was Edna Marie Buhner, who brought forward the importance of nematodes in plant diseases; up till 1920 the role of nematodes in crop production was considered unimportant. This led to various treatments of soils with

nematicides which results in improved crop production.

In England also the importance of women in this field was recognized at Rothamsted Research Center and among those employed there and making a valuable contribution was Mary Gwynne. She started her career in 1917, worked mainly on diseases of cereal crops, and in 1960 was awarded the Order of the British Empire for her contribution. Margaret Newton, at MacDonald College, McGill University, was a Canadian woman who made a considerable contribution to the knowledge of stem rusts of wheat, so important to the agricultural economy of Canada. At this period of time in the early twentieth century, women from European countries were also making their contributions.

It is recommended that this book be on the shelves of every plant pathology department library, not only to show the valuable contributions made by these scientists, but also to show the courage and dedication of these pioneering women in the face of the prejudices of those times. This book also highlights the importance of this field of science to the agriculture of the American continent and the safety of the world's food trade. We have here a book about pioneering women plant pathologists who have overcome prejudice to make considerable contributions to the economy of North America.

*Pioneering Women Plant Pathologists* is edited by Jean Beagle Ristaino; and the careers of 26 women scientists are outlined by 37 authors from the United Kingdom, United States of America, Canada, Portugal, Italy and the Netherlands. It is most interesting to read, and gives one a very good indication of what these plant pathologists have contributed to this field.

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## Birdwatcher: The Life of Roger Tory Peterson

By Elizabeth J. Rosenthal. 2008. The Lyons Press, Guilford, Connecticut. 437 pages. 34.95 CAD.

Roger Tory Peterson's parents could not afford to send him to college and he had no formal training in science. He moved to New York City, where he paint-

ed designs on furniture in the mornings to earn enough to attend art classes in the afternoon. He joined the Bronx County Bird Club, following the new concept of identifying birds in the field without the need to shoot any specimens for confirmation. The club's pres-

ident, Ludlow Griscom, was an early advocate of this method and RTP soon rivaled him in auditory and visual skills.

RTP's first book, *A Field Guide to the Birds*, published 27 April 1934 at the height of the depression, made bird identification easy for the first time. His wide-ranging combination of skills and knowledge made possible the succeeding Peterson field guides, all published by Houghton Mifflin in Boston. Each used the "Peterson system of field identification," with an arrow pointing to important field marks for each species. Millions of copies were sold. His first bird field guide went through four more revisions, the last posthumously; it was 85% complete when he died a month before his 88<sup>th</sup> birthday. Through his multifaceted achievements: books, articles, photographs, movies and paintings, Peterson became the best-known and arguably the best-loved naturalist in the world.

RTP's first teaching experiences were at a boy's camp in Maine, and in writing pamphlets for members of Junior Audubon Societies. He remained a teacher all his life. His dedicated second wife, Barbara, managed his home and business affairs with great distinction, freeing him for extensive world travel.

Liz Rosenthal's informative book is based largely on 147 interviews with 117 people, including many of the "who's who" of the birding world. Their words and memories provide inside stories about their interactions with Roger. The inevitable result of this methodology is a few minor omissions. As one example, Rosenthal's book omits one of RTP's early pupils at the Rivers School near Boston: Eliot Richardson, who much later became U.S. Attorney-General and successfully nominated RTP as the teacher who had influenced him most, resulting in the nationwide "Teacher of the Year" Award. Nor do we learn that RTP's final total of honorary doctorate degrees reached 23.

Conservation themes are interwoven throughout this book. These began with Peterson's long involvement with the National Audubon Society, as a director, secretary, columnist in their magazine, and presenter of some of their most popular screen tours. He helped found the World Wildlife Fund, helped save fragile areas such as the fabulous Coto Doñana in Spain, Mid-

way Atoll in the Pacific and Aldabra Atoll in the Indian Ocean, and helped Kenya's Lake Nakuru become a national park, where a million flamingos form "the world's greatest ornithological spectacle." He photographed all 17 of the world's species of penguin.

We learn of Peterson's close friendships with two other world-famous ornithologists, James Fisher and Sir Peter Scott. As evidence of his stature among professional ornithologists, Peterson served as president of the Wilson Ornithological Society and as Vice-President of the American Ornithologists' Union (AOU). An icon, he received the William Brewster Award from the AOU in 1944 at the early age of 36; Presidential Medal of Honor, presented by Jimmy Carter; Audubon Medal from the National Audubon Society; Gold Medal of the World Wildlife Fund, presented by Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands; Order of the Golden Ark from the Netherlands; Linnaeus Gold Medal from the Swedish Academy of Sciences, and the Smithsonian Medal from the Smithsonian Institution. He attended the dedication of the Charles Darwin Research Station in the Galapagos. RTP was happiest when serving as naturalist-lecturer aboard Lars-Eric Lindblad's *Explorer* on cruises to the Antarctic, Galapagos, Amazon River and Aldabra Atoll.

I detected two errors. Iceland is NOT north of the Arctic Circle (page 133). The Peregrine nest on the Sun Life building was in Montreal, not Toronto (page 229). I also regret that, in a book about people, the people index is incomplete, omitting some names entirely, and incompletely listing mentions of others.

Elizabeth J. Rosenthal, a graduate in both journalism and law, has previously written *His Song: the Musical Journey of Elton John*. Her Peterson life deals with a man of very different but not lesser talents, who was unusually helpful to beginner and expert alike, and whose personality shines through in the interview process. The potential audience includes the millions of people who began nature study with a Peterson field guide.

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