

REVIEW

Where to find birds in Australia by John Bransbury. 1987. Century Hutchinson. 539pp.; many maps and colour photographs.

This book is a successor to the late Roy Wheeler's works, *Birds and where to find them - New South Wales* (1974) and *The birds of Victoria and where to find them* (1979). Whereas Wheeler's books contained illustrations of the bulk of the species to be found, Bransbury has chosen to concentrate on where to find birds and leave their identification to the field guides. Although this book covers all of Australia, including offshore islands, the descriptions of the good birdwatching areas have been done in far greater detail than in its forerunners.

The book is divided into eight chapters, one for each state and one each for the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory. A number of large areas, considered worthy of coverage, have been chosen in each state, and then the places of greatest interest in each of these have been picked out for further description. For example, eight areas are dealt with in Victoria, one of which is East Gippsland. This is then separated into two, Croajingalong National Park and Lind and Alfred National Parks. These are, in turn, divided into subsections, Croajingalong into three and Lind and Alfred into two. One of the subsections of Croajingalong, Mallacoota, is further divided into five. The East Gippsland area, and in particular Croajingalong, which is an exceedingly good birding area, is patently covered in some detail. The end result is that one is given very specific information on where to go to see what - the purpose of the book.

Throughout there is good information on access roads, accommodation and/or camping facilities and, of course, habitat types and the species of birds to be seen. The simple, easy to read maps, coupled with the concise directions given in the text, should see anyone to their desired destination. A list of useful addresses is provided at the beginning of each chapter.

Most of my birdwatching experience in Australia has been in the south-east and, in my opinion, the areas chosen for discussion, in this part of the country, are well chosen and thoroughly covered. Obviously all the good birdwatching places cannot be included in a book of this size but I was sorry to find that the entire south coast of Victoria, from Geelong to the South Australian border, was omitted. Anyone relying solely on this book would miss some grand birding and scenic areas. Three national parks, a game reserve and a forest park are there.

Nonetheless, I believe that this book is a must for any birder in Australia, resident or visitor. At \$A35 it is within the price range of most. It may be obtained direct from Alan Davidson, Marketing Manager, Century Hutchinson, P.O. Box 496, Hawthorn, Victoria 3122, Australia.

P. C. M. Latham