

A binocular survey. Holtshausen, G. (1990). *Birding in Southern Africa* 42: 31–32. (Nine brands of binoculars are compared and rated on 13 features felt to be of importance when purchasing binoculars for bird-watching.)

Scanning for optics II. Bonney, R. E. and Forbes-Robertson, K. (1990). *Living Bird* 9: 12–15. (17 brands of telescopes are compared and rated on 10 features felt to be of importance when purchasing telescopes for bird-watching.)

Telescope Review: Bausch and Lomb Discoverer 15X–60X Zoom. Tarboton, W. (1990). *Birding in Southern Africa* 42: 94. (It is compared with four other telescopes.)

Measures of wing area and wing span from wing formula data. Evered, D. S. (1990). *Auk* 107: 784–787. (The adequacy of using wing formulae to characterize interspecific variation in wing area and wing span was tested. It is suggested that wing length and an index of area obtained from wing formula data are adequate surrogate variables for wing span and wing area in the species studied.)

A method of combined skin-fluid specimen preparation. Longmore, N. W. and Boles, W. E. (1990). *Auk* 107: 788–789. (The skin, minus one wing and leg, is removed and preserved as a conventional study skin. The remaining body is preserved as a fluid specimen.)

BOOK REVIEW

Bird Trapping and Bird Banding — A Handbook for Trapping Methods All Over The World.

Hans Bub, Institut für Vogelforschung Vogelwarte Helgoland Wilhelmshaven, 1991. Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York.

Originally published in four volumes in German, Hans Bub's *Bird Trapping and Bird Banding* has finally been translated into English by Frances Hamerstrom and Karin Wuertz-Schaefer and presented as a single volume. The 330 pages of text and 456 figures provide a comprehensive analysis of virtually all known capture techniques, both ancient and modern. Whilst the book's title might give the impression of a comprehensive banding manual, the sole purpose of *Bird Trapping and Bird Banding* is to provide the bird bander with an array of successful trapping techniques as well as seeding the thoughts of ingenuity, for further invention and modification of existing designs. As will always be the case, many of the original concepts for trapping birds lend themselves perfectly to modern materials and technologies, the only requirement being a creative mind.

This newly translated volume has been arranged into an Introduction (dealing principally with the ethics of bird trapping and bird banding) followed by a single chapter divided into 29 sub-sections. These include: 1. Basics of bird catching and banding; 2. Holding birds after catching until banding and release; 3. Catching methods; 4. Small and medium sized funnel traps; 5. Large funnel traps and sets with long leads; 6. Installations for catching ducks and other water birds; 7. Cage traps; 8. Pit traps; 9. Methods for catching grouse; 10. Stationary nets; 11. Drop nets; 12. Aerial clap nets; 13. Catching bats and flying foxes; 14. Catching with bow nets; 15. Raptor trapping with bow nets and stationary nets in North America; 16. Capture and nooses; 17. Catching

by hand and with dip nets on land and in water; 18. Catching in the evening and at night; 19. Catching at water places; 20. The clap nets; 21. The hedge net; 22. The tent net; 23. Catching with pull nets and, 24. Cannon netting. The latter section has been compiled by four authors one of which is Dr Clive Minton, who is regarded as the Australasian authority on cannon netting. Other Australians and their capture techniques are also mentioned throughout the text.

The remaining sections include: 25. Other books and manuals for Bird Banding; 26. Periodicals for Bird Banding; 27. Bird trapping in World Literature; 28. Bibliography and, 29. Species Index. Unfortunately, the Bibliography comprises principally German and other non-English references and the Species Index related essentially to European species. Nevertheless, this volume is really the original treatise from which many others have been compiled and the wealth of information it contains circumvents these shortcomings.

Although *Bird Trapping and Bird Banding* may not yet feature in every bird bander's library it should, at the very least form a compulsory text in the early stages of one's training. This might sound rather draconian but one of the problems associated with modern bird trapping (at least in Australia), is the almost complete reliance on mist netting. There are two principal reasons for this phenomenon, the first being the relative ease of operating mist nets and secondly, the psychological pressures which drive banders to concentrate on those techniques which yield the highest capture rates. This is not to say that mist nets should not be the basic capture method for most banding projects but rather, that each bird bander should augment their armoury of capture techniques with some of the trapping methods described by Bub. It is easy to forget that many bird species can only be caught or are more effectively caught, by methods other than mist netting. My own observation over the last three decades of banding in Australia, is the increasing reluctance of bird banders to construct their own specialist traps. The English translation of this book goes one step closer to improving this situation.

As some of you may already possess McClure's *Bird Banding*, I should make a general comparison of the two books. There are many similar or identical entries in both McClure and Bub but overall, Hans Bub offers the more comprehensive treatise on bird trapping. The principal shortcoming of Bub's *Bird Trapping and Bird Banding* is the literature survey which, whilst extensive, does not extend past the early 1970's. McClure on the other hand includes trapping methods published up until 1981. Therefore, McClure does include some traps not found in Bub's treatise, and some examples are more detailed in terms of dimensions and construction materials. McClure has also written his book as a banders manual and as such includes chapters on the types of information that can be gathered for birds during the banding process. Regardless of these differences the two books should not be viewed as competing with one another, since in terms of their principal aims, they compliment each other. No serious bird bander should be without either volume and whilst *Bird Trapping and Bird Banding* is the more expensive volume, I thoroughly recommend its addition to every bird bander's reference library. Once having purchased it, don't just read it, construct something from it!

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