

humans and nature. Troyer recounts many such experiences where his struggles to keep Alaska wild sometimes came into conflict with the needs and wants of the local populace.

Altogether, Troyer provides an honest introspective account of his professional and personal life, one that abounds with passion, hard work, and gratitude. I recommend this title to anyone wishing to learn about the

rigours of leading a challenging and rewarding career in wildlife management, especially in Alaska, one of the last truly great wilderness frontiers in America.

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The Grizzly Manifesto: In Defence of the Great Bear

By J. Gailus. 2010. Rocky Mountain Books, 406 13 Avenue NE, Calgary, Alberta T2E 1C2 Canada. 168 pages. 16.95 CAD, Cloth.

This delightful little book will probably make you very angry: It fully exposes and documents the poor actions by the government of Canada when it comes to the mis-managed grizzly bears in Alberta and the National Parks of Banff, Jasper etc. The text starts out kindly. It gives a well-balanced and nice overview on bear biology, human-bear co-evolution, some of the spirituality around bears, and what YtoY (Yellowstone to Yukon corridor) is and stands for. This publication is a true "Manifesto" (=crisp and clear with a sound message), and makes for a fascinating read for everyone and beyond naturalists. This manifesto turns indeed "grizzly" when Parks Canada and the provincial government of Alberta get described in more detail, and how they not only ignore their mandate, e.g., ecological integrity, but also grassroots citizen science. As this book shows, the state of the Canadian tax-paid entities these days often just represents a sad mix of an industrial buy-out, an uncritical top-down tradition by "the crown", and a lack of awareness and action, spiced up with non-achieving labour union arguments, and weak legal terminologies that have no teeth and which can hardly get quantified and assessed for performance. Dubious policies by the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP), the Canadian Pacific Railway, Weldwood industries operating on public lands, and similar "contractors" and "professional biologists" like D. Ealey are further named by the author, or how the Minister of Sustainable Development, T. Morton, single-handedly disbanded the entire Albertan Grizzly Bear Recovery Team. Gailus, a former journalist, did also a great investigation to explain the more or less successful model in U.S. National parks like Yellowstone and the U.S. Endangered Species Act (ESA), showing that "In Canada, our governments are failing us". Similar to L. Willcox in the U.S., it turns G. Stenhouse, B. Stelfox, V. Pissot and others into truly Canadian environmental heroes for getting fired or discriminated because they showed how bad roads are for bears (a fact the Alberta government opposes in order to keep business running at all costs), that bear extinction looms in

less than 50 years, and that a full-blown development AND protection can never happily go hand-in-hand on a finite land base. This little and easy to read publication of 150 pages and 9 chapters (no photos or maps) presents Parks Canada and SARA (Species at Risk Act) as a national shame (cited expert claim: ... "failed miserably"...) and as an insult to the global audience witnessing the extinction process in Canada first hand. All tourists and experts see it. The tragic bear biographies of "Mary" and "#56" presented in the text make that extremely clear: If you are a bear, the last thing you want is to live in an Alberta National Park like Banff (a true mortality sink) or on industrial forest land.

Consequently, this book calls for a revolution (a thing rarely heard of in Canada); to stop the Canadian laissez-faire attitude (à la "things will probably be all right"), to end the terror of the "policy wonks in Ottawa" and to stop the so conveniently "self-policing of the industry". It has, for instance, already resulted in the environmental fact that "Canada's record is one of the worst in the developed world". Canada does not handle well mass-murders, nor 'crimes against nature' (the Convention of Biological Diversity CBD 2010 targets have not been met by Canada). As this book thankfully elaborates for us, the governmental claims that Canada would be the world leader in biodiversity, and in species recovery (A. Latourelle, Parks Canada CEO) are easily exposed as incorrect and when growth in tourism and a short-term economy are the promoted goals instead: Canadians AND bears all deserve justice. "The arrogant disregard Canadian governments seem to have for both the democratic process and the natural resources they have been charged to protect" becomes obvious to all, and is now written in stone for the world to see.

This book's text can hardly be improved. But a reference to Alaska's T. Treadwell would perhaps have been good, and that The Wildlife Society (TWS) and others run a Steady State Economy initiative already for over a decade (not really existing in Canada though, apart from efforts by N. Dawe et al.), and which would make

for a very efficient solution to safe bears, wildlife and habitats in general, and in Alberta in particular. The scandalous oil sand issue is not mentioned, nor the Cadomine mine and hunting attitude fully tolerated by University research in Edmonton; Climate Change got also somewhat played down in the text. Impacts brought by globalization, as well as the poaching demands from China should have been mentioned.

“Oh Canada”: she is currently in big turmoil, and right now is the time for a major improvement, instead of “...a cowardly abdication of its legal obligation” and global responsibilities.

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Birds of Canada

By David M. Bird. 2010. Dorling Kindersley, (Represented by) Tourmaline Editions Inc., 662 King Street West, Suite 304, Toronto, Ontario M5V 1M7 Canada. 512 pages. \$40 CAD.

Primarily covering the most common species in Canada, this photographic guide by David M. Bird (Director of Avian Science and Conservation at McGill) provides an excellent starting point for newcomers to both bird watching and the “Great White North”. As a young, British ecologist, newly arrived from the rainforests of Ecuador, this book offered me a welcome introduction to the birds of North America.

In developing my interest in birds, I have previously used field guides containing illustrations rather than photos (*Collins Bird Guide: The Most Complete Guide to the Birds of Britain and Europe* by Svensson & Grant, and *Birds of Ecuador* by Ridgely & Greenfield). Whereas illustrations and line drawings can simplify the key identification features, I initially found the photographs in *Birds of Canada* to be over-detailed and confusing, particularly with families such as the American Sparrows, Thrushes and the Wood-Warblers. However, the clear labelling provides excellent guidance to the important visual cues and the accompanying illustrations highlight things to look for in flight. The extra photographs of alternative/seasonal plumages and sexual dimorphism are useful, although on occasion seem to be lacking. More could also be made of subspecies and morphs, but perhaps this would be confusing for the newcomers that this book seems to be aimed at.

The first few pages provide a solid background to birds, describing their evolution, anatomy, flight, migration, courtship and reproduction. I found these sections to be clear and thorough, offering information appropriate to children, adults, novices and seasoned amateurs alike. There is also an excellent section detailing the main components of field identification and describing how to use the book. Introduction pages to each of the main groups provide an excellent starting point, illustrating features common throughout the families and describing general behaviours.

Each page thereafter is devoted to one of each of 435 commonest species in Canada (30 rarer species are presented later, four to a page). The large photographs and 1-page-per-species approach results in the

book being much larger than it could have been. I also found this to slow up the process of identification, as you have to turn through many pages upon seeing an unrecognisable bird in the field, in comparison to other books which show multiple, closely-related species on one page (*Birds of Ecuador*, *Peterson Field Guide to Birds of North America* by Roger Tory Peterson). There are diagrams provided to illustrate flight patterns: a functional extra which I have not seen in other field guides. The maps on each page illustrate North and Central America as a whole, which is a nice way to learn about a bird’s migration patterns, but the maps are small and it can take a while to determine the exact status of birds in the Maritimes or Southern Ontario for example. Adequate descriptions are used for songs and calls (never an easy task), although I did find more could have been included to do with the length of the notes (Black Capped Chickadee for example).

I liked the way in which the classification, size, social units, lifespan and (of particular value to me) conservation status for each species is clearly presented. Another nice touch is the box found on each page depicting two of the most likely species to confuse a newcomer. However, I did notice one or two instances of poor correlation. Despite the fact that on the Wood Thrush page, the Hermit Thrush is shown as being a potentially confusing species, there is no mention of the former on the latter’s page. There is also the case of Boat-Tailed Grackle, which is shown as a similar species to the Common Grackle, but receives no mention among the rare or vagrant species, and according to other sources is quite unlikely to turn up in Canada.

There also appears to be a few errors in the distribution and status descriptions of the main birds. For example, there is no mention of the Burrowing Owl’s precarious state in Canada, or of the recovery program that is being implemented to prevent its decline. Laughing Gulls are included among the 435 common species, but the map shows their only Canadian occurrence is during migration in parts of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. There is no mention of the increases