

The book is replete with original drawings and caricatures by L. Renaud, that add to the readability of the prose. In addition, the authors have included several flow charts depicting the basic concepts of the ecological survey and outline how a multidisciplinary team should be organized to carry out a successful

ecological inventory.

GILLES ROBITAILLE

Environment Canada, Laurentian Forest Research Centre,
Box 3800, Ste-Foy, Québec G1V 4C7

Applications de la Télédétection à l'Étude de la Biosphère

By C. M. and M. C. Girard. 1975. Masson, Paris. 186 pp., illus. Paper in French. 96F.

Remote sensing techniques (both instrumentation and application) have developed very rapidly since 1970. This text, published in 1975, is very scientific in its approach, is extremely well documented, is clear and to the point, is logically structured, and is very particular to details in methodology and definition. The work examines a wide spectrum of applications and the in-depth analysis of examples will certainly be appreciated by the readers. The Girards have organized this work into four parts, each complete in itself.

In part one, 'Remote Sensing,' the authors present a discussion of the principles involved. They describe the characteristics and the energy sources of the electromagnetic spectrum, the influences of the atmosphere, and explain the mechanisms involved for the peculiar behavior of vegetation, soil, water, ice and snow in different spectral ranges such as the visible and near infrared, middle and far infrared, and the very high frequencies. Both photo and non-photographic instrumentation is described. Data treatment analysis, i.e., visualization, increasing contrast, and information selection, as well as factors that influence the utilization of data are given.

Part Two is entitled 'Methods' with the emphasis being placed on methods of photo and image interpretation.

Sixty percent of the book (Part Three) is devoted to 'Interpretation.' It is a detailed account applied to vegetation, pedology, agronomy, and to anthropogenic influences. Text examples are often related to

actual photographs. The interpretation of vegetation is looked at from the point of view of species identification, recognition of vegetation assemblages, edaphic conditions, and succession of plant communities. The pedology section looks at the identification of soil characters that are both readily and not readily discernable. Examples are also given. The interpretation of agricultural lands is also treated. The authors give information on crop identification, soil modification, and touch on the problem of agronomic cartography. They also expand on the utilization of remote sensing for pest control. Anthropogenic influences on the environment are increasing. The artificial interferences by man that lead to urbanization are not treated. What the authors do look at is the interpretation of influences on the natural environment and rural modifications.

In Part Four an example of how high-altitude data (35 km high from balloons) are utilized in interpretation and thematic cartography (i.e., geology, soil utilization) is given. This part concludes with a flow chart on data treatment by computers.

During the three years since publication, many innovations have occurred in the field of remote sensing. This text remains a valuable source of material for those interested in acquiring a basic applications reference. It is recommended for use at the university level and by current practitioners.

GILLES ROBITAILLE

Environment Canada, Laurentian Forest Research Centre,
Box 3800, Ste-Foy, Québec G1V 4C7

Wildness Is All Around Us: notes of an urban naturalist

By Eugene Kinkead. 1978. Dutton, (Canadian distributor Clarke Irwin, Toronto). 178 pp., illus. \$12.50.

Wildness Is All Around Us is an informative and entertaining book that offers a variety of insights into some items of natural history, plus many entrancing digressions. For example, the essay on the coyote

(pronounced *ky oat*) describes not only its distribution, paleontological and recent history, appearance, behavior, relationship with man, and reproduction with other canids, but also includes lengthy asides on endangered species (of which the coyote is certainly not one), on sheep and sheep-ranching, on

wolves, and on the principles of heredity. But there is almost nothing about coyotes in cities, despite the subtitle of the book.

Kinthead also includes a long essay on the House Sparrow, a fascinating history of this species' introduction to North America (Manhattan) in and after 1848 to reduce the measuring-worm population, (even though anti-sparrow organizations existed in England as early as 1744), and its subsequent conquest by 1880 of much of the continent. Until that time these widely-acclaimed birds were shipped freely about the country to eradicate noxious insect pests. After that time, however, the sparrow was seen rather as "an evil of monstrous proportions." Sparrows molested over 70 species of native birds; ate fruits, vegetables, grain crops, and urban plantings; and around dwellings were dirty, noisy, and blatantly promiscuous. The *New York Times* predicted in 1887 that once Americans realized how tasty sparrows roasted with bacon were, their numbers would be decimated by cooks, but this did not happen. Instead sparrow populations continued to expand until about 1910, when the increase in the automobile and consequent decrease of horses and the grain they ate undercut the sparrows' food supply, especially in winter and in cities. Since then sparrow populations, although still numerous, have stayed within more reasonable bounds.

The other chapters in this book are really vignettes rather than essays. The first describes the pandemonium which took place one spring when a Steller's

Eider from Siberia was spotted off the Boston South Shore. The area was soon swamped with birders wanting to increase their Life List, alerted by a message taped for the "Voice of Audubon" Boston telephone number. The second is about a rare birch tree, *Betula uber*, rediscovered with the help of the author after 60 years beside a creek in the Appalachians of Virginia. The geological history and the wildflowers of Central Park in New York City are the subjects of the other two chapters.

Although Eugene Kinthead is primarily a writer rather than a biologist, he includes in this book a wealth of biological information. He is not correct, however, in saying that no person in North America has been attacked by a healthy wolf. In northern Ontario in 1942 a wolf knocked a railman off his handcar, and, while canoeing in 1893 through the barren lands of Canada, J.B. Tyrrell's party was besieged by wolves. Similar attacks have occurred in Eurasia. I think also few would agree with the dust-cover statement that the fox is threatened with extinction.

This well-written book with its few, evocative sketches uses a format which could profitably be a model for many would-be authors writing about nature. I recommend it highly to both laypeople and professional biologists.

ANNE INNIS DAGG

Box 747, Waterloo, Ontario N2J 4C2

OTHER

Field Photography: beginning and advanced techniques

By Alfred A. Blaker. 1976. Freeman, San Francisco. (Canadian distributor Oxford University Press, Toronto). 450 pp., 55 black and white plates, 12 color plates, plus 41 pp. field book. \$19.95.

This book is a very comprehensive treatise on the subject of field photography. It follows the same format and style as the author's previous publication, *Photography for Scientific Publication: a handbook* (Freeman, San Francisco, 1965), which presented a synthesis of laboratory photographic technique. The purpose of this publication is instructional; the author states in the preface that, "this book will represent a self-teaching aid to help interested persons improve the quality of photographs they may need." The text accomplishes this purpose.

The book is organized into three sections: Background, Basic Photography, and Field Photography Techniques. There are also three appendices containing film speed data as well as development and copying information. A supplemental pamphlet summarizes mathematical tables and formulae in a form suitable for field use.

The background section introduces the reader to scientific field photography. It discusses merits of photography, photographic training, and offers advice on photographic operations. This information is valuable to persons currently involved in professional photographic capacities. The author continues this section with a discussion on the tools of photography. He accurately and extensively describes cameras, film,



Dagg, A I. 1979. "Wildness is all around us: notes of an urban naturalist, by Eugene Kinkead [Review]." *The Canadian field-naturalist* 93(2), 217–218.
<https://doi.org/10.5962/p.346946>.

View This Item Online: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/89186>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.346946>

Permalink: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/346946>

Holding Institution

Harvard University, Museum of Comparative Zoology, Ernst Mayr Library

Sponsored by

Harvard University, Museum of Comparative Zoology, Ernst Mayr Library

Copyright & Reuse

Copyright Status: In copyright. Digitized with the permission of the rights holder.

Rights Holder: Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

License: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/>

Rights: <https://biodiversitylibrary.org/permissions>

This document was created from content at the **Biodiversity Heritage Library**, the world's largest open access digital library for biodiversity literature and archives. Visit BHL at <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org>.