

CHASING THE SUN

MUSSO, T. 2023. Creative Editions, Mankato, MN. 40 pp, 40 illustrations in B&W and colour. Hardcover. ISBN: 978-1568463896, \$19.99

The annual migration of Arctic terns *Sterna paradisaea* from the Arctic to the Antarctic is one of the textbook examples of the phenomenon, as the terns see more daylight than any other species on Earth. However, it is hard to visualize a 120-gram tern moving across the vastness of the North and South Pacific, flying low over the water around icebergs, and then sitting flightless on icefloes as it molts. It is equally hard to imagine the terns breeding in the Arctic with their camouflaged young hunkering down on a tundra that is alive with predators, such as bears and jaegers. *Chasing the Sun* captures the scope of that annual cycle in a series of beautiful woodcuts accompanied by a simple narrative. This book is aimed at children of 6–8 years, but younger children and adults will enjoy the woodcuts that illustrate the different stages of the migration. The narrative moves along at a good clip and there are whales and jaegers and caribou to liven things up. A few pages at the end of the book give more details about the terns and the animals they encounter. This is not a scientific book and there are some minor errors, but they don't distract from the story.

I was not able to field test the book on my grandkids, but I suspect they would enjoy the strong visuals of the woodcuts, which are the heart of the book. They would also lap up the extra information provided at the end. The woodcuts remind me of the art of Rockwell Kent, who had the Arctic as a recurring theme. Musso's most impressive woodcuts depict the night sky, in contrast to the yellow-orange of the high Arctic day.

This is a book for people who work on terns, and for children who have shown (or will show) an interest in seabirds or the polar regions. It would also be a fine gift for fellow field workers, helping them to recall their summers among their study subjects, or for family and relatives who may not understand the powerful attraction of seabirds for those of us who work with them.

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NEW(ISH) AND NOTEWORTHY

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Ocean Bestiary: Meeting Marine Life from Abalone to Orca to Zooplankton

KING, R.J. 2023. University of Chicago Press. Chicago, USA. 320 pp. Cloth, ISBN: 978-0226818030, US\$22.60. eBook, ISBN: 978-0226825809. US\$21.99.

Ocean Bestiary is the second offering from the Oceans in Depth series by the University of Chicago Press. (The first was *Oceans Under Glass: Tank Craft and the Sciences of the Sea*.) Here, King, a writer and natural historian and historian and sailor and probably a few other things, takes readers on a whimsical, alphabetized tour through various marine taxa. The life he samples is global in range and scope. The 41 chapters—I had to count several times to make sure I was correct, as some letters get more than one chapter—are generally short and punchy, pungent, or both, like parables. King rarely constrains himself to mere organismal description, but rather leaps off to touch on a creature's past and present intersections with humans. The result is a lively potpourri that lends itself to intermittent sampling. King's own drawings and paintings accompany the text.

Flight Paths: How a Passionate and Quirky Group of Pioneering Scientists Solved the Mystery of Bird Migration

HEISMAN, R. 2023. HarperCollins Publishers. New York, USA. 288 pp. Cloth, ISBN: 978-0063161146, US\$30. eBook, ISBN: 978-0063161139, US\$12.99.

I make it a point never to blame an author for their book's title or subtitle, since they often have little say in the matter. As such, I don't hold Rebecca Heisman personally responsible for the whole "passionate," "quirky," "pioneer," or "solved" business, which I generally think to be among the more pernicious tropes when it comes to popular science writing. Thankfully, the book is better than its subtitle. Heisman takes readers on wide-ranging trips that track our growing understanding of how, why, and where birds migrate. Through a series of interviews and solicitations over social media, she invites the reader to sit with different researchers as they wrestle with how, exactly, to adapt this or that piece of technology so it will fit on a bird that weighs only a few grams. Most of her focus is on terrestrial birds, or at least ocean-adjacent species like shorebirds, but seabirds make the occasional memorable appearance.

Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life, 3rd Edition

ROSENBERG, M. B. 2015. PuddleDancer Press. Encinitas, USA. 264 pp. Paperback, ISBN: 978-1892005281, US\$19.95.

Nearly everyone who studies seabirds also has dealings with people who do not study seabirds. Most of those people are sympathetic to the plights of seabirds to some degree, but not all of them necessarily have the same objectives of a seabird scientist. There might be members of the general public who like to build sandcastles on beaches where seabirds want to breed, or developers who want to erect a hotel in an estuary, or members of the fishing industry or other resource extractors, or even scientists from other disciplines for whom a seabird's welfare is not their top priority. Talking to people whose goals might be diametrically opposed to your own can be stressful and frustrating, but being able to talk those people in a constructive fashion can only be a benefit for the birds. In *Nonviolent Communication*, psychologist Marshall Rosenberg has offered a number of tools and strategies and shifts of perspective to help smooth out what might otherwise be conflict-filled interactions. After all, when people can't sort out their differences, the birds suffer.

The Home Place: Memoirs of a Colored Man's Love Affair with Nature

LANHAM, J.D. 2017. Milkweed Editions. Minneapolis, USA. Paperback, ISBN: 978-1571313508, US\$18. eBook, ISBN: 978-1571318756, US\$9.99

"I am as much a scientist as I am a black man; my skin defines me no more than my heart does," J. Drew Lanham writes near the start of his book, *The Home Place*. "But," he continues, "somehow my color often casts my love affair with nature in shadow. Being who I am and what I am doesn't fit the common calculus. I am the rare bird, the oddity: appreciated by some for my different perspective and discounted by others as an unnecessary nuisance, an unusually colored fish out of water." With that marker laid down, Lanham takes readers on a journey in the currents of time, place, race, and the difficult wilds of the American South where he was born, raised, and still lives. Tracing his own affinities for the natural world through his family's history in the segregated South, Lanham draws us into the complex interplay between race and the wild. His writing is lyrical, his characters human, feathered, furred, scaled. All of them have something to show of Lanham's place in space as he meditates on it, too. "But in all my time wandering," he writes, "I've yet to have a wild creature question my identity."

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