

The Mountain and the Migration; A Guide to Hawk Mountain

By James J. Brett. Foreword by Roger Tory Peterson. Revised and expanded edition. Cornell University Press, 1991. 114 pp. Softcover, \$13.95

By William L. Murphy

This edition is the text for "Hawk Mountain 101." It contains all a visitor needs to understand the mountain, the meteorology, the hawk flights, and the ecology of eastern Pennsylvania.

Hawk Mountain is the world's most famous hawk lookout site. Established as a sanctuary in 1933 to stop the annual autumn slaughter of migrating hawks, it attracts thousands of human visitors each year. Brett tells its story well, beginning with the history of man along the Kittatinny Ridge. He covers the geography.

flora, and fauna of the area, touches upon the mysteries of migration, and expounds about the weather patterns that determine the dynamics of hawk migration.

In the second half of the book Brett addresses hawks and hawkwatching. He covers such topics as tools of the trade (plenty of food, a soft cushion), daily peaks and the noonday lulls, how to dress to survive, and how to identify and use geographic points of reference from the lookouts. In 32 pages he presents a manageable amount of information about the identification of hawks, eagles, and vultures. Frank Fretz illustrates this section with very fine drawings but is not credited on the cover for his major contribution. On the other hand, Roger Tory Peterson, who seems to have made a career writing forewords for books such as this, is credited on the cover. In any case, Fretz's illustrations will allow observers readily to identify most raptors they see.

Two especially interesting parts of each species account are "Could Be Confused With" and "Lookout Tips." In the latter section are hidden meaty little nuggets of site-specific trivia gathered from years of observing. For example, "Sharpshins hug the ridge; Cooper's hawks tend to veer off to the north, avoiding the lookout; goshawks fly above eye level and nearly always fly north of the ridge."

New in this edition are two appendices. One

graphically displays raptor life cycles and diets; the other provides statistics since 1934 of annual raptor counts at Hawk Mountain. An accompanying pocket-sized, accordion-folded map depicts on one side a panoramic view from the North Lookout and a map of the region. Drawings of raptors are on the other side.

Even veteran hawkwatchers will learn a thing or two from this book. It should be read by anyone planning a visit to Hawk Mountain.

William L. Murphy, an experienced hawkwatcher and tour guide, is the author of *A Birder's Guide to Trinidad and Tobago*.