

## **Galápagos Diary.**

Author: COX, GEORGE W.

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**Galápagos Diary.**—Hermann Heinzel and Barnaby Hall. 2001. University of California Press, Berkeley. 272 pp., 931 color photographs. ISBN 0-520-22836-7. \$24.95 (paper), \$45.00 (cloth).

This book presents a very personal account of the bird life and ecology of the Galápagos Islands by Hermann Heinzel, an accomplished artist and illustrator of several European bird books, and Barnaby Hall, a young photographer. When you read the book, it really does seem as if you are attending a friend's slide show of a trip to the Galápagos. A narrative, at times almost conversational, of the authors' 19-day visit to the Galápagos Islands (except Darwin and Wolf Islands) in July 1995 begins abruptly on page 6, without a preface or table of contents, and continues without break through page 158. This portion of the book is profusely illustrated with color photographs, taken for the most part by the second author, and some color sketches done by the first author. Most photos are of birds, but some mammals, reptiles, plants, and landscapes are also shown. The color sketches show details of bird plumage and behavior, and also maps of areas visited. The maps, with some effort, permit the reader to trace the visit through the islands day by day, although one overall map with the entire visit indicated would have been helpful.

The photos, often many per page, vary greatly in quality. Some are too dark to show detail, and many are not in clear focus. In a few cases with photos of birds, the species is unidentifiable (e.g., p. 118, bottom). Many are repetitive: p. 150, for example, contains 13 photos of a single Greater Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus ruber*) feeding or walking; p. 151 gives a single, full-page photo of this same bird. Lava Herons (*Butorides sundevalli*) and Galápagos Doves (*Zenaida galapagoensis*) are shown repeatedly. Common names are used inconsistently in several cases in this part of the narrative.

A second section, entitled "The Photos the Sketches and Drawings," begins on page 159 and continues through page 261. This section takes a bird-by-bird approach. The distribution (usually in yellow or orange) and authors' observations (usually in red) of each resident and some wintering species are shown on a sketch map of the islands. Sketches, varying from very rough to finished, and a few photographs, are used again in this section to illustrate details of plumages and behavior. Handwritten notes accompany the sketches. The placement of portions of the accounts of some species on different pages (usually facing) is awkward in several instances.

A checklist of birds known from the islands is given at the end of the second section. Bird species are indexed by scientific and common name. Unfortunately, the pages in the second section with the detailed account of the species are not highlighted in the index. None of the mammals, reptiles, plants, or other features of the islands are indexed, and there is no bibliography. Why some nonbreeding species are illustrated (e.g., Sanderling [*Calidris alba*]) and others not is unclear. Why some species not listed for the Galápagos, such as Sabine's Gull (*Xema sabini*) and birds seen in Quito, Ecuador, are included is also unclear.

As a guide to the birds of the Galápagos, this book has a great many shortcomings. Although the illustrations, especially the sketches, capture interesting aspects of plumage and behavior, the book does not substitute for currently available field guides, such as Castro and Phillips' *A Guide to the Birds of the Galápagos Islands* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1997). The bird life and general natural history

of the islands, however, are presented in an attractive visual manner. The book is appropriate to a general natural history audience and should thus serve to stimulate the interest of individuals contemplating a visit to the islands.—GEORGE W. COX, Biosphere and Biosurvival, 13 Vuelta Maria, Santa Fe, NM 87506, e-mail: geowcox@aol.com