

BOOK REVIEWS (Continued)

BIRDS IN BASS STRAIT, by Ken Simpson, published by A. H. and A. W. Reed, Artarman N.S.W., 1972; 112 pp., coloured and B. W. illustration. Price \$4.95.

This book is the first of a series on Australiana being published for the BHP Oil and Gas Division. As the name implies, it deals with the birds likely to be recorded in or near Bass Strait. Most extreme rarities are not included. The birds are grouped in sections headed "The Breeding Seabirds," "The Freshwater Seabirds," "The Regular Summer Migrants," "The Regular Winter Migrants," and "Shorebirds and Others," plus sections on "Landbird Migration across Bass Strait," "Studying Seabirds" and "Marine Mammals of Bass Strait."

The text is full of interest, covering such items as Australian and world range, plumage, identification, habits, breeding, etc., although there is by no means uniform coverage—the text varying from less than half to almost two pages per species. Maps include migration routes of northern migrants and the Tasmanian Muttonbird, and possible sources of southern seabirds reaching Australia.

The outstanding feature of this book consists undoubtedly of the magnificent photographs, mainly in colour, of most species featured in the text. Their main value is to show identification features.

I can find no major cause for criticism; there are a few minor points, e.g. it is stated that the Pied Cormorant lays two eggs, whereas 2-3 form a clutch in South Australia at least—South Australia should be included in the range of the Dominican Gull.

One must applaud the author's plea for protection of cormorants; his statement "Even today, no cormorants are protected species" was no doubt written before these birds were afforded legal protection in South Australia.

The author obviously does not intend this book to be as comprehensive as Serventy, Serventy and Warham, *The Handbook of Australian Seabirds*, (1971), although it does contain certain additional information—particularly on the two species of Giant Petrel. It is, in fact a useful companion to the *Handbook*.

BRIAN GLOVER.