







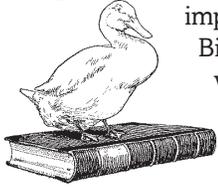


## BOOKS FOR BIRDERS

R. U. Abyrdar II with Sy Schiff

This month we will be reviewing a thrilling adventure story! The author will be attempting a global BIG YEAR! Mr. Strycker eventually sees and hears over 6,000 bird species in over 40 countries. This book is about the “places, people, cultures, adventures, and misadventures along the way.” Some of these stories will be as interesting as the birds Noah sees.

The book is *Birding Without Borders* by Noah Strycker. He is an expert birder, and he had to be young and full of energy in order to accomplish all he set out to do! More importantly, he is a very talented writer!



Birds face extreme challenges worldwide and in spite of this he sees hope because more people than ever are working to protect these birds! His goal was simple: “in the next 12 months I hope to see 5,000 species of birds!”

So, let’s begin to see if he can accomplish this “very exhausting and exciting” goal! (Now Sy’s contribution.) “Many serious birders do a Big Day, some do a State Big Year, and a very few do a North American Big Year. But only a few have ever tried a WORLD Big Year. This book chronicles such a feat. The planning and logistics for such an endeavor are covered, and how this plays out in fact make this an interesting read! Mr. Strycker takes us to untrodden and exotic locations where rare and unusual birds are ticked off. So, this is a birding adventure as well as a travelogue.

The idea was not to just see a ton of birds, but to see 5,000 of the world’s 10,365 birds in a single year and break the previous high total of 3,000+ birds. There are two “official” world birding lists, Clement’s (10,365) and International Ornithological Congress (10,612). The former was chosen as it is the one used by eBird, a primary source of data for his adventure, and most North American birders.

Mr. Strycker chose to enlist the best local birders he could find in each location he visited, so as to have the best available help. He enlisted local help rather than use tour leaders who may not have been as familiar with the local treasures. The people, how they were recruited, and the help they provided are enumerated with people’s names and location descriptions.

Seeing 6,042 birds — the number he saw — is a big undertaking and discussing each one as you go along is just boring. He does not do this! A smattering of strange bird names show up in the text, but it all flows from the excellent narrative. A lot of it is because the birds are endemic, rare, or incredibly rare. An appendix lists all the birds in the order ticked off and the country they were seen in. And there are mishaps, accidents, problems and weather. All are described and solved. The 5,000 goal is always in view and how it was approached makes this book read

like a mystery story. You know he gets there and beyond, but how the adventure unfolds makes it both interesting and exciting!

I’m not quite sure who the audience is for this book. I doubt the usual feeder birder would be interested. Birders who travel might like it. However, so much territory is covered (the better part of the world) that very little space is allotted to any one locality. If you like travel, adventure, and especially the excitement of birding, you’ll like (as in enjoy) this book. It has it all!”

R.U.’s contribution: Sy recently celebrated his 90th birthday!! And he is still going strong!!! Read it and ENJOY!!!

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### DISPLAY CASE AT ROCKVILLE CENTRE LIBRARY

Thanks to the efforts of SSAS member Alene Scoblete, information about our chapter has been occupying one of the Rockville Centre Public Library’s tall display cases throughout the month of November. Since we didn’t have anything readily available for such a display, we are grateful to Alene not only for inviting us to have a presence at the library, but for doing nearly all of the work and creating some of the things that are in the display.

If your own library has similar space available, please e-mail [mssperling@optonline.net](mailto:mssperling@optonline.net).



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