

Brandt T, Jülch C, Wasmer K, Moning C, Wagner C (2011) The Top 50 sites for birdwatching in Germany. (Die 50 besten Vogelbeobachtungsplätze in Deutschland). Der Falke. Aula-Verlag, Wiesbaden. ISBN 978-3-89104-746-0. 19,95 €.

This book is published as a special issue of one of the leading German birdwatcher's magazines, "Der Falke", and large parts of its contents have already been published in single articles of the journal. It presents the 50 best sites for birdwatching in Germany. Each single chapter gives an overview about typical habitats and interesting bird species and some logistical advices of the where and when of birdwatching at the spot. Sometimes, interesting additional information on other cultural or natural study activities in the region is given. Boxes show "How to get there" and give useful local contact addresses. In contrast, explicitly stated GPS coordinates are often not very helpful as they regularly do not show the particular spots from where to find the birds (e.g. a hide) but the center of the next village. A register at the end of the volume shows which rare species occur at each site. A Top 50 list of sites can always be debated. However, it is a pity that some species which are much sought after are not covered by the selected sites (e.g. Rock Bunting) or are not mentioned at suitable sites (e.g. Cirl Bunting). Nice photos and maps make it a pleasure to browse in the well illustrated book and to think about the next short trip. However, if you are seriously interested in birdwatching in Germany, the three volume book "Vögel beobachten in Nord-, Süd- und Ostdeutschland" published by Kosmos and written by members of the same author team might be a better and more comprehensive (but more expensive) choice. Germany still lacks a concise English "Where to watch birds" guide, and authors and editors sadly failed to fill this gap. Instead, recycled material was used to write a nice although not really essential book for birdwatchers.



Darius Stiels  
 Zoologisches Forschungsmuseum Alexander Koenig,  
 Bonn