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# The Sibley Guide To Birds, 2nd Edition



## Synopsis

“Undoubtedly the finest guide to North American birds.” —Guy McCaskie, *Birding*

The publication of *The Sibley Guide to Birds, First Edition* quickly established David Allen Sibley as the author and illustrator of the nation’s supreme and most comprehensive guide to birds. Used by millions of birders from novices to the most expert, *The Sibley Guide* became the standard by which natural history guides are measured. The highly anticipated second edition builds on this foundation of excellence, offering massively expanded and updated information, new paintings, new and rare species, and a new, elegant design. The second edition of this handsome, flexibound volume offers a wealth of improvements and updates:

- All illustrations reproduced 15 to 20 percent larger for better detail.
- Includes nearly 7,000 paintings digitally remastered from original art for enhanced print quality.
- Expanded text includes habitat information and voice description for every species and more tips on finding birds in the field.
- More than 600 new paintings, including illustrations of 115 rare species and additional paintings of common species and regional populations.
- More than 700 updated maps of ranges, showing winter, summer, year-round, migration, and rare ranges.
- 85 bird family pages now cross-referenced to species accounts.
- Revised taxonomic order and most current common names for every species.

*The Sibley Guide to Birds, second edition*, brings the genius of David Allen Sibley to the world once again in a thoroughly updated and expanded volume that every birder must own.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Artist, writer, and naturalist David Allen Sibley is the author and illustrator of a series of successful guides to nature, including the New York Times best-seller *The Sibley Guide to Birds*. He has traveled extensively throughout North America and abroad as a birding tour leader and lecturer. Sibley has contributed art and articles to *Smithsonian*, *Science*, *The Wilson Journal of Ornithology*, *Birding*, and *North American Birds*, and he wrote and illustrated a syndicated column for *The New York Times*. He is the recipient of the Roger Tory Peterson Award for Lifetime Achievement from the American Birding Association and the Linnaean Society of New York's Eisenmann Medal. He lives in Concord, Massachusetts.

**\*\*UPDATE 2\*\***I have purchased the second printing of this second edition and I am very happy with the corrections. The richer colors add new life to Sibley's paintings, the text is clear and easy to read and the layout is much improved. Page space is better utilized in this edition, allowing Sibley's beautiful illustrations to take center stage. The only caution I add is that, to my knowledge, there is no way to know what printing of the second edition you are purchasing when ordering through .com.**\*\*UPDATE\*\***The second printing has been released and should be available at brick & mortar book stores as well as a number of online stores. Hopefully will make a distinction between the first and second printings so that its customers can order the correct one. In case there is no way of knowing which printing you are buying from , I offer the following 2 options:1) Go to a brick and mortar book store and physically purchase the guide. You will want to turn to the copyright page and look for "Second printing, July 2014". If it says "Second Edition, March 2014" then you are holding the first printing with the off colors and light font.2) Go to an alternative online source such as Buteo Books, where the second printing is in stock, available for shipping and it is specified as the second printing. They even have the option to buy the first printing if one is so inclined. When I obtain the second printing, I will update this review. So far, I have heard good things: the font is readable and the colors are more representative of what one would see in the field. I'm looking forward to this second printing!**\*\***A very annoying feature of this guide is the font. Not the size necessarily, but where many of the bird illustrations are WAY too dark, the font is way too light and lacks contrast. I keep tilting the book to get a better angle as if the text is catching or reflecting light but it's not. I have great eyesight, but I find the text a strain to read. Many of the birds are too dark and the colors are simply wrong. This shouldn't be a matter of opinion. The book betrays itself with statements like "brilliant red" on the scarlet tanager when it's obviously showing dark red; "flaming-orange throat" on the Blackburnian when it's dark orange; "bright orange-red bill (never as dark red as many

Caspians)" on the royal tern, well it's not bright and when you flip to the Caspian it's almost the same color! The orange-crowned warbler is green, the hooded warbler has a highlighter-yellow face, the baltimore oriole's orange is more like an american robin's red and there are many more disappointments. Some of the bird's faces are so dark that you can barely discern any detail. Sibley set the bar and his second edition does not measure up. Update: Thank you to R. Matz for providing a link to an article from birdforum.net in which Sibley has stated in a Facebook correspondence "There are a few images (like the male Scarlet Tanager) that are obviously not OK and will be corrected in the next printing, but I think that involves a very small number of images. The font is another issue, and it's clear that too many are finding it hard to read. Tests are already being done to find a way to fix that in the next printing." Improving the readability of the text will be a major improvement. Along with the male Scarlet Tanager, I hope Sibley will fix color issues with the following birds:- Eastern and Western Bluebirds (too dark)- Orange-crowned Warbler (too green)- Blackburnian Warbler (make the orange "flaming")- Baltimore Oriole (brighten the orange)- Lighten some of the birds on which the facial features cannot be discerned! Look forward to the next printing (which should be available this September) and the fixes it will offer. A "Thank you" to B. Walker for contacting Knopf to find out that a fix is in the works and that we should have a new print available to purchase by late Summer.

Sibley's First Edition is my birding bible. Sadly, the font chosen for this edition is so thin I find it unreadable with normal reading glasses. I have no such problem with the First edition. Also, colors are so saturated they are misleading in some species, especially with reds. These problems are a huge disservice to David Sibley's outstanding artwork. I am returning it, as the delicate text is unreadable, making it useless to me, and I imagine to many folks over 50. A huge disappointment, as I'd looked forward to Sibley's new plates and the expanded information in the text, but I can't read it without a magnifying glass! A big mistake by the publisher. I regretfully caution folks who need reading glasses to wait for a better printing.

No one can question Sibley's technical and artistic skills when it comes to birding, but similar to other reviews, I simply couldn't read the text. The font was too small and the font color was too washed out. Literally, after 5 minutes, I just couldn't read more. Just to be clear too, I would not classify this as a field guide. It is way too heavy for that, it's literally 3 lbs and I doubt few would venture into the field with this. I work out with weights 5 days a week and this book is heavy, partly driven by the high quality paper, it's clear that Sibley put huge effort into the illustrations and

updating the content. And kudos to him for that! But you have to question the editors who laid out some of the content. I just found the layout often fragmented and hard to follow. As a pure field guide, I still prefer the National Geographic Guide. It's simpler to use, find your birds faster and provides more succinct and helpful written descriptions. As a reference source, Sibley's new edition is fine, but for an everyday go to bird guide, it doesn't work for me and I returned it.

I waited a long time for this new edition and ordered two copies.. I really enjoy the updated nomenclature, species in the current order, the addition of 111 species which should have been in the first edition IMHO, also the additional information and ID aids are greatly appreciated. I am however disappointed in the illustrations compared to the first edition to the point The colors came out over saturated especially on darker birds and most are now much too dark compared to the first edition... Compare the two editions on birds like Willet, Spotted Sandpiper, Poorwill or almost everything dark. I do like his fix on the Parula page, but still find such species as Clay-colored Sparrow over saturated. They do not reflect reality as noted in the field. This likely a production problem and I am sure Mr. Sibley is not happy about this. This really bums me out and I just am never going to get used to it. In addition the font size of the type has been reduced significantly and is not black but is a "gray" that makes reading it, especially for older folks, a real challenge. Yes I will keep a copy for sure for the information therein as I find it of great value, but I will not be giving up my first edition anytime soon and NGS will remain my primary general field guide. or at least the until the printers/press correct the color and print darkness.... I applaud and thank Mr. Sibley on his significant effort and realize that once things go to press/printers he loses a lot of control is lost over what happens there. I am sure the publisher has copies in the 4 digits it needs to sell... But not to me the way it is now. I had to return extra copies today which I was sad about. I still think folks should at least have one copy.

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