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Lynx Edicions. (2009). Internet bird collection [e-resource review]

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<http://ibc.lynxeds.com> (reviewed in CHOICE April 2009).

[Visited Jan'09] Sponsored by the Handbook of the Birds of the World (e.g., v. 1-2, CH, May'96, 33-5102; v. 8, CH, May'04, 41-5303), the Internet Bird Collection (IBC) is an online video library of the world's birds. At the time of this review, the site contained more than 28,000 videos representing 5,500 species, with video submissions from almost 200 contributors ranging from professionals to amateurs in over 30 countries. In addition, IBC has recently started to add photos (very limited) and sounds (none currently available). Access from the home page is through searching or browsing. Browsing is hierarchical and starts with orders and then families. After selecting a family, users see a list of individual species. Each species includes the number of videos, photos, and sounds available, along with conservation status. Searching is by species and common names. However, if a common name includes a hyphen, (e.g., black-capped chickadee or black-headed heron), it must be included, or no results will be retrieved.

IBC provides a brief taxonomy and distribution information at the beginning of each species. Videos are listed by descriptive title and include video length, date recorded, number of years on the IBC, and the average site-user rating. Videos last an average of 20-30 seconds and require Adobe Flash, which is available in most Web browsers. On poorer quality videos, images can appear jumpy or out of focus, or they may suffer from lack of light. Also, for every video gem (e.g., wandering albatrosses in courtship display), there is plenty of mundane footage, such as individual birds sitting in trees or eating at backyard feeders. Thankfully, the IBC's ranking tab allows video sorting by average user rating. Even with its shortcomings, the IBC is the only site containing such a large collection of bird videos. Summing Up: Recommended. All collections and birding enthusiasts.

--K.P. McDonough, Northern Michigan University

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