

Publications

Loch Lomondside by Mitchell, J. (2001), 232 pp, ISBN 000 220145 3 (hbk.), £34.99, 000 220146 1 (pbk.), £19.99, Harper Collins Publishers, London.

This is the latest title in the long-established *New Naturalist* series to concentrate specifically on a wide range of topics relating to British natural history. This is also the fourth title to focus on a particular area of Scotland – the Hebrides, Orkney and Shetland Islands were previously covered. Loch Lomond has the largest surface area of any fresh water lake in Britain and is situated close to the city of Glasgow. This study looks not just at the lake but the range of habitats that surround it. The book looks at all facets of natural history from the geology and climate through the fauna and flora of different habitats to the influence of man, particularly the impacts of farming, forestry, fishing, industry and recreation. A final chapter looks at the conservation of the area both in the past, present and future.

In many ways, this is an area that is a microcosm of events that are happening on varying scales worldwide. Loch Lomondside is essentially the beginning of the Scottish Highlands and contains a wide diversity of habitats from the lake to the mountains that reach 1130 m. It has been a popular tourist destination for many years and has suffered the problems that this can bring, and farming and forestry have had major impacts on the environment. Until relatively recently, extensive conifer plantations were having a detrimental impact on the landscape both visually and ecologically. Times are changing, and the book details the various struggles that have taken place to ensure adequate protection of this important landscape. The themes that crop up in this book are familiar to communities worldwide. As such it provides an interesting insight into key issues in the temperate environment. The book is well written, illustrated and referenced, and will be enjoyed by a wide audience.

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Asian Turtle Trade: Proceedings of a workshop on Conservation and Trade of Freshwater Turtles and Tortoises in Asia (Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 1–4 December 1999) edited by van Dijk, P.P., Stuart, B.L. & Rhodin, A.G.J. (2000), 164 pp, ISBN 0 9653540 2 4 (hbk.), US\$35, ISBN 0 9653540 3 2 (pbk.), US\$25. Chelonian Research Monographs 2, Chelonian Research Foundation, 168 Goodrich Street, Lunenburg, MA 01462, USA.

This is an aesthetically pleasing volume in Chelonian Research Foundation house style. It is produced in association with the Wildlife Conservation Society, TRAFFIC, the World Wildlife Fund, Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service. It details the proceedings of a topical regional meeting and, to maximize impact, publication has been swift. Unfortunately the take home message of the editors is that the scale and impact of trade exceeded their worst expectations.

The volume is structured as per the workshop: (1) An Introductory section, including a foreword, participant list and executive summary, (2) North-east Asia (China Hong Kong and Taiwan), (3) Indochina (Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam), (4) South Asia (Bangladesh, India, Myanmar), (5) South-east Asia (Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Thailand), and (6) a final section with a summary and an appendix of recommended changes to the IUCN red list of Asian turtle species. Each regional section has 3–5 papers on status, trade, conservation and a regional summary from all the session contributors. Given the timeliness, quality and inexpensive nature of this publication, I would recommend it as essential reading for those working on terrestrial and freshwater chelonian conservation and those in any way concerned with wildlife trade.

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Applied Ethnobotany: People, Wild Plant Use and Conservation by Cummingham, A.B. (2001), 300 pp, ISBN 1 85383 697 4 (pbk.), £24.95, Earthscan Publications, London.

This book is the third in a series of methodological manuals for ethnobotany in the People and Plants

programme. It is a companion volume to *Ethnobotany: A Methods Manual* by Gary J. Martin (1995) and *People, Plants and Protected Areas: A Guide to in situ Management* by John Tuxill & Gary P. Nabhan (1998). The emphasis of this new volume is the impact of the harvesting of wild plants by people, and it is intended as a '...practical guide to approaches and field methods for participatory work between resource users and field researchers.' The book is mainly aimed at African students and at those working in conservation and rural development, with many of the examples and case studies drawn from Africa. The first three chapters deal with understanding patterns of demand for wild plant products, the next three cover methods for studying the supply of plants which are the focus of that demand, and the last two chapters deal with resource management and conservation.

Chapter 1 discusses the historical context of conservation, the shift of emphasis from strictly protected areas to sustainable resource use, the maintenance of ecological processes and genetic diversity, and the human influence on landscapes and species. Chapter 2 outlines methods for obtaining an understanding of the preferences and demands for particular plant species, including interviews and discussions with resource users, survey and appraisal of resources and resource users, and questionnaire design and implementation. This chapter also includes an account of identification, collection and storage of plant voucher specimens, useful hints on matching folk taxonomy with Linnaean taxonomy, and conversion of traditionally used local measures to international units. Chapter 3 deals with the understanding of trade networks, emphasizing the importance of knowing who is involved in trade, how it is organized and changing, where the resource areas are or were previously, and how demand and supply are likely to change in the future. Chapter 4 deals with the methodology and equipment used for measuring plants and assessing harvests in order to answer questions such as: how does the size and age of a plant relate to the production of leaves, bark or other non-timber products, or how long does it take for a plant to reach harvestable size? This chapter also discusses the impacts of harvesting on individual plants. Chapter 5 looks at harvesting from the perspective of plant population dynamics, describing methods for vegetation sampling, and ways of studying population structure to assess effects of harvesting on a population. Chapter 6 describes how the patterns and processes of harvesting relate to vegetation dynamics and disturbance, and the methods that can be used to take this into account in the development of conservation and resource management plans. The penultimate and last chapter deal with conservation

behaviour and community-based conservation and resource management, including land use, tenure, property rights, traditional beliefs and religious practices.

This well written manual reflects the author's long experience and understanding of African ethnobotany and conservation issues. It is clear that not only does a researcher have to be familiar with the plant that is harvested and the area where it grows, but also with the social, economic and cultural issues of the communities that harvest and use it. I wonder whether the author and publishers have considered putting parts of chapters online so that the book's guidelines can be readily available to interested students, researchers and resource managers?

My only criticism of this manual is that it is aimed at people with a slightly higher education level than is often met with in locally educated students, wildlife rangers and resource managers. Nevertheless, I hope that researchers can make full use of this resourceful book and that, despite its price, which may prove to be prohibitive to students and workers in developing countries, it may somehow be made available to those who most need it.

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New publications

Mosses, Liverworts, and Hornworts. Status Survey and Conservation Action Plan for Bryophytes compiled by Hallingbäck, T. & Hodgetts, N. (2000), IUCN/SSC Bryophyte Specialist Group, 106 pp, IUCN, Gland, Switzerland and Cambridge, UK. ISBN 28317 0466 9.

This Action Plan reviews the status of bryophytes worldwide, provides examples of habitats currently rich in bryophytes, and recommendations and initiatives for the conservation of some of the most important habitats and endangered species. The Action Plan begins by describing the biology, classification, origin and number of species of mosses, liverworts and hornworts, with a brief discussion of their importance and uses. It continues with a discussion of the threats to bryophytes, the causes of these threats and the gaps in our knowledge. Species conservation actions are then discussed and current conservation measures presented. The recommendations of the Action Plan are proposed in the final chapter.

Megapodes. Status Survey and Conservation Action Plan 2000–2004 edited by Dekker, R.W.J., Fuller, R.A. & Baker, G.C. (2000), 39 pp, WPA/BirdLife/SSC Megapode Specialist Group. IUCN, Gland, Switzerland and Cambridge, UK. ISBN 28317 0537 1.

Pheasants. Status Survey and Conservation Action Plan 2000–2004 edited by Fuller, R.A. & Garson, P.J. (2000), 68 pp, WPA/BirdLife/SSC Pheasant Specialist Group. IUCN, Gland, Switzerland and Cambridge, UK. ISBN 2 8317 0539 8.

Partridges, Quails, Francolins, Snowcocks, Guinea-fowl, and Turkeys. Status Survey and Conservation Action Plan 2000–2004 edited by Fuller, R.A., Carroll, J.P. & McGowan, P.J.K. (2000), 63 pp, WPA/BirdLife/SSC Partridge, Quail, and Francolin Specialist Group. IUCN, Gland, Switzerland and Cambridge, UK. ISBN 28317 0538 X.

The first versions of these three Action Plans were published to cover 1995–99, and these second editions provide an update. They review the conservation status of the particular groups and highlight recent conservation achievements. They provide an overview of the nature and extent of threats to the groups, summarize threat status for individual species, and provide detailed information about those species identified as threatened. They all conclude with an outline of the priority tasks for implementation during 2000–2004.

Tree Medicine by Peter Conway (2001), 313 pp, ISBN 0 7499 2173 0 (hbk.), £17.99, Piatkus Books, London.

Trees are an important source of medicines worldwide. This book provides a general overview of the medicinal values of trees, and profiles of the healing properties and health benefits of over 170 tree species. Some of the species described are threatened in the wild, in part as a result of over-exploitation. One of the purposes of the book is to encourage tree conservation, and the author, a practising medical herbalist, outlines practical conservation actions which can be taken to save trees from extinction.

Biodiversity and Ecological Economics. Participation, Values and Resource management by Tacconi, L. (2000), 254 pp, £35.00 (hbk.), £14.95 (pbk.), Earthscan Publications, London. ISBN 1 85383 675 3 (hbk.), 1 85383 676 1 (pbk.).

This book provides an introduction to applied ecological economics, written as a textbook for students of the subject and for those seeking an understanding of the role of economics in ecology and conservation. The first 98 pages provide an introduction to methodology, paradigms, ethics and participation, and in the remainder of the book various authors describe seven case studies from Australia, Indonesia, the United States, Vanuatu, India and Papua New Guinea.

Natural North by Potts, A. (2000), 160 pp, £16.99, Zymurgy Publishing, Newcastle Upon Tyne, UK. ISBN 1903506 00 X.

A glossy coffee-table book with fabulous pictures, *Natural North* is a photographic celebration of the wildlife found throughout the north of England. Using colour photographs Allan Potts covers a diverse cross section of flora, fauna and landscapes. Supporting text provides the reader with basic background information.

The Butterflies of Pakistan by Roberts, T.J. (2001), 200 pp, £30 (hbk.), Oxford University Press, Karachi and Oxford. ISBN 0 19 577995 9.

Following on from his three books on the birds, wild flowers and mammals of Pakistan, T.J. Roberts has now tackled the butterflies. The book provides a checklist, a comprehensive account of species by family, including extensive colour plates of species and some colour photographs of habitats, and chapters on form and function, senses, predators and defence and distribution.

Otters. On the Swirl of the Tide by B. MacCaskill (2001), 2nd edn., 174 pp, £9.99, US\$ 19.95 (pbk.), Luath Press, Edinburgh. ISBN 0 946487 67 7.

Foxes. The Blood is Wild by B. MacCaskill (2001), 2nd edn., 173 pp, £9.99, US\$ 19.95 (pbk.), Luath Press, Edinburgh. ISBN 0 946487 71 5.

In the 2nd editions of these books, Bridget MacCaskill describes the work of herself and Don MacCaskill with the wildlife of Scotland. The first book describes their long-term study of the natural history of a family of otters living on a small West Highland sea loch, and the second gives a keenly observed account of the precarious existence of wildlife in the Highlands, revolving around two wild fox cubs found abandoned at their den and rescued. Both books include eight pages of colour photographs by Don MacCaskill.