

Book reviews

In the Rainforest

Catherine Caufield
Heinemann, 1985, £10.95

Of books on tropical forests, there is no end—at least one dozen, whether popular or professional, during the past year. Yet there is one that certainly embellishes the record. Indeed, Catherine Caufield's book is one of the liveliest and most interesting, not to say illuminating, that I have come across.

An American journalist living in London, Caufield describes her several years of intermittent travel throughout the biome, from Panama to Indonesia and from Amazonia to Australia. Hers is a personalised account of the tropical forests situation, based on conversations with scores of scientists, conservationists, foresters and exploiters of every stripe. It is the first-hand experience behind her narrative that is the main strength of Caufield's book. One gains a sense that the thing is authentic from start to finish—and Caufield's deep concern for tropical forests rings strong and clear.

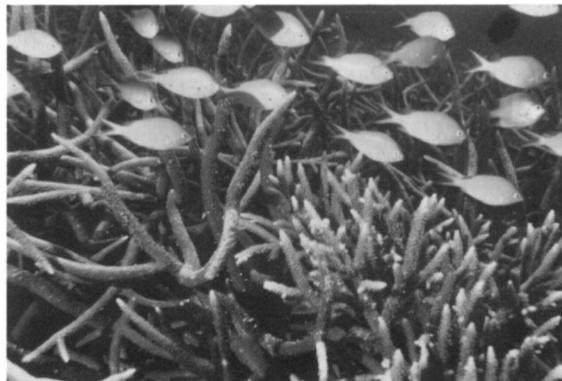
On the whole, this is a fine effort to portray the situation, or rather the plight, of tropical forests. Eminently readable by the lay person, and spirited in approach, the book should appeal not only to the established conservationist, but—much more importantly—to some of the 'great unconverted'. Not all conservation books can claim as much; Caufield's book certainly can.
Dr Norman Myers, Consultant in Environment and Development

Marine and Coastal Protected Areas: A Guide for Planners and Managers

Rodney V. Salm, assisted by John R. Clark
IUCN, Ave du Mont Blanc, CH-1196, Switzerland
Copies are available for \$20.00 plus shipping costs from the above address.

The result of a Workshop on Managing Coastal and Marine Protected Areas, held in October 1982 during the World Congress on National Parks in Bali, Indonesia, this has been designed as a guide and sourcebook for the increasing number of people involved in planning either national systems of marine and coastal protected areas or individual sites. It will probably appeal to

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Coral reef, Indonesia (WWF/Tom Moss).

a far wider audience, including teachers, students and anyone concerned with the marine environment and its management, as it provides a broad overview of a wide range of marine conservation issues.

It is divided into three parts. The first introduces protected areas as one of the many tools for managing coastal and marine resources; despite the title, the book is based quite rightly on the fundamental premise that protected areas are only one aspect of marine conservation. The economic importance of the coast and sea, threats to marine ecosystems, and the role of protected areas are discussed, illustrated with numerous interesting facts. For example, in 1980 the total direct and imputed indirect economic benefits of the Virgin Islands National Park amounted to \$23.4 million, while its costs were only \$2.1 million! A comprehensive bibliography will enable anyone requiring further details to follow up the examples. This section also outlines a process for planning a regional or national system of protected areas, and provides an extremely useful overview of the various international conventions and treaties which relate to the marine environment, such as the Law of the Sea.

The second part of the book considers the specific principles and techniques for planning and managing protected areas in different environments, including coral reefs, lagoons and estuaries, open seas, polar seas and small islands. An admirable aspect of this book is that it stresses the need to recognise that coastal ecosystems

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have both land and water components which must be managed together.

The final section offers a miscellany of case studies, and provides recommendations and strategies to help protected area planners and managers carry out their tasks. These range from a 'manager's guide' (which includes a questionnaire designed to find out if you are a successful manager!) and a discussion of the problems of classifying coastal and marine habitats (including examples from the US and UK), to fairly detailed descriptions of the management of particular marine parks such as the Great Barrier Reef and the Laguna de Tacarigua National Park in Venezuela.

The book draws heavily on the authors' experience and, on their own admittance, displays a strong bias towards their own style of planning protected areas. Most of the examples come from the US and the tropics, particularly Indonesia, but, given the few existing publications in this field, this is a minor quibble and is possibly more indicative of the state of marine conservation in other parts of the world than of any failing in the book. The methods developed over the past century for managing terrestrial protected areas cannot always be applied easily to coastal and marine areas because their ecosystems are so open, difficult to demarcate and economically important. This book should help stimulate major new efforts in establishing and managing our marine heritage.

Susan Wells, IUCN Conservation Monitoring Centre, Cambridge

The Island of South Georgia

Robert Headland

Cambridge University Press, 1984, £14.95

Some years ago, I suggested to a publisher that South Georgia would make a suitable addition to a series of titles on islands. The proposal was turned down by the series's advisor on the grounds that the place was of insufficient interest. Robert Headland's comprehensive book shows that, even without the military events of 1982, this was wrong. South Georgia is a magnificent island packed with interest. It has something for everyone, including stamp collectors and even steam locomotive enthusiasts. The book will most

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interest students of polar exploration, maritime history and, now, international politics. For conservationists, South Georgia provides two well-documented stories of animal exploitation: whaling and sealing. It was one of the major centres of twentieth-century whaling. The industry there and elsewhere reduced the Antarctic whale population to only 10 per cent of its pristine size, and it is showing only small hopeful signs of recovery. By contrast, the fur seal was brought even closer to extinction but, perhaps because the removal of the great whales has considerably reduced competition, it is now flourishing. Its numbers are even becoming an embarrassment because the seals are eroding the vegetation around their breeding beaches. A third phase of exploitation, that of fishing mainly for krill, may soon become a major industry. *Oryx* readers will be disappointed that the book does not include more discussion of the ecosystem of South Georgian waters and the human impact on them.

Robert Burton, naturalist and author

Northern Ecology and Resource Management

Edited by Rod Olson, Frank Geddes and Ross Hastings

University of Alberta Press, 1985, £21.00

The Living Tundra

Yu. I. Chernov, translated by D. Löve

Cambridge University Press, 1985, £27.50.

The Arctic is one of the last frontiers. Until World War II, lifestyles of the scattered inhabitants had changed little over the centuries. They were principally nomads who followed migrating herds or shifted hunting grounds according to season. Now there are cities, mines, roads and pipelines springing up and, although the area is huge, the impact of man is becoming felt. Developers are striding into the Arctic wastes, but the conservationists are snapping at their heels. The tundra and taiga of the North has an advantage over the tropical savannahs and forests, because development has just started and the region is within the territories of scientifically advanced and 'environmentally aware' nations. Thus, ecologists are able to make baseline studies and monitor, predict and, hopefully, mitigate the effects of development.

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