

Book reviews

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In return, as a service to readers, this review section of *Ibis* is organized and edited by Michael G. Wilson and Professor Ben Sheldon of the Edward Grey Institute, with the help of a panel of contributors. They are always grateful for offers of further assistance with reviewing, especially with foreign-language titles.

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BRADLEY, P.E. & REY-MILLET, Y.-J. **A Photographic Guide to the Birds of the Cayman Islands.** 288 pages, numerous colour photographs, 8 maps, 6 appendices. London: Christopher Helm, 2013. Paperback, ISBN 978-1-4081-2364-5. Website: <http://www.bloomsbury.com>.

Photographic guides to regions are becoming increasingly popular as digital images become easier to take and to publish. This guide, earlier versions of which appeared in 1985 and 1995 (see *Ibis* 128: 299–300 and 137: 452), is

outstanding, being lavishly illustrated with excellent photographs by Yves-Jacques Rey-Millet of the 195 regular bird species resident or migrant on one or more of the three Cayman Islands situated in the Greater Antilles. Alongside images of each of these species is a succinct yet authoritative account by Patricia Bradley that summarizes taxonomic position and field characters, and includes notes on similar species, voice, habitat and behaviour, range and status. Before the species accounts, introductory chapters, illustrated with maps and photographs, describe human history, aspects of geography, climate, geology, avifaunal origins, and vegetation and habitats. The history of ornithology in the Cayman Islands is reviewed, followed by an

introduction to the 50 species (in 41 genera) recorded breeding, including four West Indian endemic landbird species of restricted range that have significant populations in the Cayman Islands: Vitelline Warbler *Setophaga vitellina*, Cuban Bullfinch *Melopyrrha nigra*, Thick-billed Vireo *Vireo crassirostris* and Cuban Parrot *Amazona leucocephala*. The geographical location of the Islands accounts for c. 80% of the avifauna occurring as non-breeding migrants, and many are seen in good numbers.

The Caymans were uninhabited from pre-Columbian times until the arrival of the first permanent settlers in the mid-18th century, although visitors had already made a big impact on forests and wildlife resources, as a result of which five bird, two mammal, and one reptile species had become locally extinct by the middle of the 20th century. Conservation takes the form primarily of protected areas, which make up a little under 8% of the total land surface. Sadly, despite a National Conservation Law having been drafted some 13 years ago, it remains to be adopted by the local government. The authors describe the many conservation challenges faced – lack of sustainable land-use planning, lack of protected areas, loss of biodiversity, illegal hunting, and introduced species, not to mention the possible effects of climate change. The work of the National Trust to combat some of these threats is described.

The next section gives a brief round-up of where to watch birds on each of the three islands, selected sites being listed as well as what species you might see there. Some useful information for visiting birdwatchers is then presented followed by an introduction to how to use the guide, before the species accounts that form the bulk of the book. Appendices list extinct species and subspecies, scientific names of plants mentioned in the text, distribution of 20 breeding seabirds, shorebirds and waterbirds, 29 breeding landbirds, 17 endemic subspecies, and abbreviated accounts of 47 vagrants (fewer than 10 records each), followed by a selected bibliography. There are no species maps but they are scarcely necessary for such small islands.

I cannot imagine a better book to take if one is visiting the Cayman Islands to go birding. The photographs are some of the best I have ever seen, perfectly complemented by the informative text, and it fits neatly into an anorak pocket!

Peter G. H. Evans

FFRENCH, R. **A Guide to the Birds of Trinidad & Tobago. 3rd edn.** xxviii + 407 pages, 40 colour plates, 14 black-and-white figures (13 photographs) and 4 maps. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press (Comstock Publishing Associates), 2012. Paperback, US\$39.95, £24.95, ISBN 978-0-8014-7364-7. Website: <http://www.cornellpress.cornell.edu>.

If I were given some money to come up with the perfect birding country, it would look very much like

Trinidad: situated on the coastal shelf of a large bird-rich continent, with flat as well as mountainous terrain and covered in a mixture of wet and dry forests, swamps, and mangroves – all this and a pleasant tropical climate to boot. And if there were some money to spare, I would throw in a sizeable oceanic island, such as Tobago. The two-island nation harbours an impressive bird list of 269 breeding residents and an additional 208, mainly northern, migrants visit the islands. The presence of 72 bird families means there is no real need to travel to the South American mainland.

This is the third edition of French's guide to the birds of Trinidad and Tobago, but it is fair to say that it represents a complete overhaul of its predecessors. One of the criticisms of the second version, published in 1992 and reviewed in *Ibis* 135: 211–212, was that it should have taken fuller advantage of the extensive new information available, but the text for this third edition has been thoroughly revised. Large sections are completely rewritten, largely by French himself and completed after his death in 2010 by R. G. Gibbs; it has more species entries than ever and the illustrations have been newly prepared by a fresh team of illustrators. Only the photographs that accompany the introductory chapters have a dated look.

Unlike the previous editions, this guide follows the taxonomy and sequence adopted by the American Ornithologists' Union, which brings it in line with other field guides published about the region. Families are introduced by a single paragraph, and species entries are fairly standardized ('Habitat and status', 'Range and subspecies', 'Description', 'Voice', etc.). They range from a quarter of a page for rare migrants or extirpated species (such as the Horned Screamer *Anhima cornuta*) to almost two pages for iconic species such as the Scarlet Ibis *Eudocimus ruber* or the Oilbird *Steatornis caripensis*. The plates are nicely sandwiched in the centre of the guide, and although prepared by eight different artists, are all of sufficient quality and are up to the job of identifying most species. Where relevant, the illustrations show males and females, and those groups that are mostly observed in flight (raptors, seabirds) additionally may have flight images.

The appendix is of relevance for a selected few – I am not sure how many of us are interested in which of 16 museums we can find skins or eggs of each and every species found on the island – but each entry has a little box beside it and this may come in handy as a tick box. Overall, this is a very useful and timely addition to the ornithology of the Caribbean and northern South America. The previous editions lasted two decades – I am confident this third edition will remain useful for as long a time.

Vincent Nijman

GAVRILYUK, M.N. (ed.) [**Birds of Prey in the Dynamic Environment of the Third Millennium: Status and Prospects. Proceedings of the 6th International Conference on Birds of Prey and Owls of North Eurasia, Kryvyi Rih [Krivoy Rog], 27–30 September 2012**]. (In Russian, with abstracts, captions and Contents in English.) 616 pages, numerous black-and-white figures and tables, a few photographs (most in colour). Kryvyi Rih, Ukraine: Kryvyi Rih Press (D.A. Chernyavskiy), 2012. Hardback, price not given, ISBN 978-966-2775-03-7.

MEL'NIKOV, V.N. (ed.) [**Buzzards of North Eurasia: Distribution, Population Status, Biology. Proceedings of the 6th International Conference on Birds of Prey and Owls of North Eurasia, Kryvyi Rih [Krivoy Rog], 27–30 September 2012**]. (In Russian, with abstracts, captions and Contents in English.) 272 pages, numerous black-and-white figures (including photographs) and tables. Kryvyi Rih: Center-Print Ltd, 2012. Hardback, price not given, ISBN 978-966-78-30-953.

Kryvyi Rih (transliterated from Russian as Krivoy Rog) is situated in the Dnipropetrovsk Region of south-central Ukraine. 'North Eurasia' refers essentially to the former USSR, mainly the Russian Federation and Ukraine. The wealth of material in the Conference Proceedings will be potentially of great interest to raptor and owl specialists outside the area covered and, for those with no knowledge of Russian, the useful English abstracts and contact email addresses may be a path to finding out more.

Papers in the first of these two publications are grouped under eight subheadings, in the first of which (Palaeontology, morphology and systematics) there is a taxonomic list of North Eurasia's diurnal raptors and owls. No fewer than 29 longer articles and six short communications appear under 'Distribution, numbers and population'. Fourteen (including several on diet) are devoted to the biology of four falcons (Falconidae), Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*, White-tailed Eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla*, Short-toed Snake Eagle *Circaetus gallicus* and two *Aquila* species. There are also contributions focusing on Scops Owl *Otus scops* (in Uzbekistan), Eurasian Eagle-Owl *Bubo bubo*, Little Owl *Athene noctua*, Long-eared *Asio otus* and Short-eared Owls *A. flammeus*. The first of 10 longer articles on migration and wintering is in English and discusses the relationship between the central and east European Saker Falcon *Falco cherrug* populations, based on the results of ringing and satellite tracking. One of two papers in the subsection 'Behaviour' describes the basic components of courtship behaviour in diurnal raptors, while the other is concerned with the effect of weather and phases of the moon on the vocal activity of Tawny Owl *Strix aluco* and Pygmy Owl *Glaucidium passerinum*. There are two papers on ectoparasites and four devoted to 'Museums and

bibliographies'. In 'Birds of prey and people', topics range from threats and conservation, urban raptors, nest aids, birds and electric transmission and communication lines, to 'messengerism' of owls in human dreams.

Eleven of the 25 papers in the second volume of the Conference Proceedings present data on the Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*. Contributions on the Long-legged Buzzard *Buteo rufinus* describe its biology in the south-western Kopet Dagh (Turkmenistan), its distribution and aspects of its ecology in the Saratov Trans-Volga Region, current population numbers and breeding ecology in the Republic of Kalmykia and (ecology) in the Belgorod Region. The only detailed contribution on the Upland Buzzard *Buteo hemilasius* is by V. V. Ryabtsev and is based on studies in the Irkutsk Region (Pre-Baykal). E. S. Chalikova's paper on buzzards in the Western Tien Shan notes the trapping of three hybrids *B. rufinus* × *B. hemilasius* there in the autumn of 2002. From a long-term study of the Rough-legged Buzzard *Buteo lagopus* in Kamchatka, E. G. Lobkov provides a very detailed account of its status and ecology, while S. A. Mechnikova *et al.* focus on the site-fidelity of this species in the southern Yamal Peninsula (Western Siberia).

M.G. Wilson

HAMBLER, C. & CANNEY, S.M. **Conservation. 2nd edn.** x + 416 pages, 22 colour plates, numerous black-and-white figures and tables. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013. Paperback, £27.99, ISBN 978-0-521-18168-6. Website: <http://www.cambridge.org>.

The 2nd edition of *Conservation* (first published in 2004) has been fully revised with significant additions and exploration of overlaps between ecology and disciplines such as the social sciences and ecosystem services. Books that try to provide an overview of the increasingly complex world of global conservation are available in abundance, but few reach the high standards of this excellent 2nd edition, which aims to give an overview of conservation and to demonstrate the many interdependent specialisms required. It certainly achieves this, and more, not aiming to be the final word on conservation issues around the world, but actively encouraging readers to undertake further investigations of their own. Examples used throughout the book are varied, taken from a wide range of taxa, including, of course, birds and across all continents; underpinning them is an authoritative reference list that is comprehensive, yet not superfluous or irrelevant.

Chapter 1 impressively sets the scene for the rest of the book, and provides a summary of what contemporary conservation is, and how we got to this point. The following chapter on threats to biodiversity is an excellent overview of the pressures on habitats and biodiversity, and in many respects is rather depressing. Throughout the book, but notably in this chapter, the authors use tables to cram

the book with examples and associated references that will be an excellent resource, particularly for students. The strongest chapter is that on evaluation of priorities for species and habitats and would be a valuable source of information and methods for a wide range of conservationists, from students to practitioners, NGOs to government agencies. The different ways that priorities can be assigned are clearly set out for readers to take their own view on what is applicable to them – the authors resist the temptation to offer their own perspective of how priorities should be set.

Chapters 4–6 are more targeted at key issues that underpin how we ‘do’ conservation, before moving on to some of the areas where conservationists need to embrace other disciplines. The final chapter on environmental policy is probably too short and may have tried to bring together too many varied disciplines under one umbrella. The use of a single case study of the Mali Elephant *Loxodonta africana* to illustrate how the various themes and disciplines presented in the book come together to achieve conservation success, seems a strange way to end what is an excellent book. Condensing the single case study to a little over two pages does not do justice to the complexity of the conservation challenge. It might have been better to expand the case study, or indeed to use other examples. However, this is a minor point. Overall, the book is an outstanding summary of conservation, the issues facing biodiversity, and how working at a multidisciplinary level can achieve positive results. It will be of particular value to students at all levels, and should become a standard text book especially for undergraduates. I only wish this book had been published when I was at university.

Robert Sheldon

HIRSCHFELD, E., SWASH, A. & STILL, R. **The World's Rarest Birds.** 360 pages, 103 colour illustrations, 977 colour photographs, 610 maps, 2 appendices. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013. Hardback, US\$45.00, £34.95, ISBN 978-0-691-15596-8. Website: <http://www.nathist.press.princeton.edu>.

This authoritative and beautiful book covers all 590 bird species that are Critically Endangered, Endangered, or only survive in captivity, as well as the 60 poorly known species classified as Data Deficient. A core aim of the project was to bring together the best available photographs of as many of these 650 species as possible, through a photographic competition that attracted 3500 entries from 300 photographers from around the world, all of whom donated their images without charge. Photographs of 515 of the threatened and 21 of the Data Deficient species are presented, in itself a remarkable achievement. Threatened species for which photographs could not be sourced are illustrated by specially commissioned paintings by Polish artist Tomasz Cofta.

Yet this is so much more than a gorgeous coffee table book. Using data from BirdLife International, an introductory section explains IUCN threat criteria, gives an overview of the global distribution of threatened species and of Endemic and Important Bird Areas, quantifies the relative importance of different threats, and provides a short essay on each; these essays are succinct but detailed, with a wealth of examples, and all sections are lavishly illustrated by case studies. The book is well timed, following the most recent review of the threat status of global bird species completed by BirdLife International for the IUCN in May 2012. The remainder of the book is divided into seven regions: Europe and the Middle East; Africa and Madagascar; Asia; Australasia; Oceanic Islands; North America, Central America, and the Caribbean; and South America. Each of these begins with an overview, highlighting acute conservation challenges, illustrated by vignettes of threatened bird hotspots, and conservation issues faced by particular groups of species or flyways; these are well researched, clearly written and beautifully designed. A table and account of the numbers of threatened species in the region, classified by threat category and family, is followed by a directory of the threatened species found in the region, comprising a text entry for each species that gives a concise description of its distribution, status, population, key threats and conservation needs, presented alongside a range map and photograph. Each species account includes a QR matrix barcode that provides a link to the relevant species factsheet on the BirdLife International website, for further details or updated information. Although the individual species information can be found elsewhere, I have not previously seen it synthesized in such a comprehensive yet accessible way, interspersed by the vignettes and case studies that keep interest fresh and give a unique overview. This regional arrangement lends itself well to advocacy; however, full lists of all extinct and globally threatened species, arranged by bird family, are also provided in Appendices.

This has clearly been a labour of love for the team who produced the book. The result is a testament to the efforts and design skills of the authors, the generosity of the photographers who donated their images, and the expertise of the many other contributors. Stunning images emphasize the beauty and irreplaceability of these species, while the range maps – many merely a small dot on a regional map – are a stark reminder of how close we are to losing so much. The book is very modestly priced and is likely to become a convenient and standard source of information for birders, students, conservationists and professional ornithologists. My hope is that it will also be distributed more generally, to educate, inspire and galvanize a much wider community to address the urgency of conservation action.

Paul Dolman

MACKRILL, T., APPLETON, T. & MCINTYRE, H. **The Rutland Water Ospreys**. 160 pages, 200 + colour photographs, 200 + colour illustrations and tables. London: Bloomsbury, 2013. Hardback, £20.00, ISBN 978-1-4081-7414-2. Websites: <http://www.bloomsbury.com>, <http://www.ospreys.org.uk>.

This book is the story of the pioneering project between Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust and Anglian Water to translocate Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* chicks from Scotland to Rutland Water in the English Midlands, starting in the mid-1990s, through to the present day, and the project's legacy. It details the challenging work undertaken by the staff and volunteers and their commitment to the task.

Most of the book is taken up with an account of re-establishing Ospreys in southern England over the last two decades. A foreword by Roy Dennis, who played a pivotal role in the steering group and project start-up, precedes the opening chapters, the first of which, 'Ospreys return to the UK' is written by Tim Appleton, the second, 'Translocation and welcome returns', by Helen McIntyre, and the four others (on the expansion of the Rutland colony, fishing Ospreys at the site, migration and the legacy) by Tim Mackrill. Collecting young Osprey chicks in Scotland, rearing them, the releases, the first returning birds and the first successful breeding all make for a stimulating read.

Much detail is presented on the setting up of the project, including the IUCN criteria (in respect of introductions and translocations) that had to be met, followed by the pitfalls and steep learning curve (early failures led to the decision to take healthy chicks from Scottish nests rather than the runt), which took the team into the second year. This was after all the first time such a scheme had been undertaken with Ospreys in Europe. Much of it was based on the successful reintroduction of the species to Minneapolis and St. Paul (Minnesota, USA) in the 1980s.

Chapters for each of the following years of the project between 2002 and 2012 mark the comings and goings of individual Ospreys and their breeding attempts. Over the five years between 1996 and 2001, a total of 64 chicks were translocated to Rutland Water.

Six non-breeding translocated adult males were regularly recorded there during the 2004 breeding season and a further 11 young Scottish Ospreys (nine of them females) were brought down in the following year to redress a gender imbalance in the population. A total of 62 young have fledged from the Rutland Water area since 2001.

Attention then shifts to the legacy of the project and it is made clear that advances in satellite telemetry have enhanced our knowledge of Osprey migration, enabling every movement to be followed and giving a unique insight into migration flyways. Most Ospreys from

Northern Europe winter on the west coast of Africa in Senegal, The Gambia, Guinea and Mauritania. The Rutland team also attempted to glimpse migrating Rutland Ospreys at key points of their journeys in the Pyrenees and West Africa.

The Osprey Migration Foundation was established in 2011 with the aim of linking schools along migration flyways and providing wildlife education for schools in the key wintering areas. Schoolchildren in The Gambia have already benefited from this programme, including by the provision of computers and optical equipment. The Rutland translocations have also inspired similar projects in Spain and Italy. Close collaboration between the Italian and Rutland teams helped to ensure that, after four years, Ospreys (originally from Corsica) were breeding again in Italy, thanks to the successes achieved in Rutland.

To the many people thrilled by the Fish Hawk, fascinated by birds and what modern technology reveals about their migrations, also keen to learn more about wildlife conservation in the UK and internationally, *The Rutland Water Ospreys* offers an exciting and inspirational narrative, greatly enriched by the individually different, diary-style accounts of volunteers and the superb paintings and photographs, with their attendant notes, contributed by John Wright, the project's field officer. On a critical note, it is unfortunate that George Waterston (1911–80), who set up Operation Osprey in Scotland, appears once as 'George Watson' and twice as 'George Waterstone'.

Stephen Bentall

NICOLAI, B. (ed.) **Rotmilan Red Kite – Roter Drachen. (Abhandlungen und Berichte aus dem Museum Heineanum 9, Sonderheft)**. (In German and English.) 88 pages, numerous photographs, maps, graphs and tables, in colour throughout. Halberstadt, Germany: Förderkreis Museum Heineanum e.V., 2012. Paperback, for orders and enquiries contact: heineanum@halberstadt.de. ISSN 0947-1057.

Not only does the Red Kite *Milvus milvus* have a relatively small population of 21 000–25 000 breeding pairs and a restricted range (almost) entirely within Europe, but about half of the world population breeds in Germany. Furthermore, the highest breeding density recorded in the entire range of the species relates to the northern Harzvorland (lowlands adjoining the Harz Mountains) in Sachsen-Anhalt. The town of Halberstadt in this region regularly has around five pairs of Kites.

This special issue of the journal *Abhandlungen und Berichte aus dem Museum Heineanum* is the catalogue for an exhibition of the same name that opened at the Museum Heineanum in September 2012, but it also serves very well as a mini-handbook. 'Roter Drachen' in

the title is a German translation of the species' English name. Text and excellent graphs and tables supported by an abundance of photographs describe and discuss the species and many aspects of its biology and ecology, primarily within its German stronghold but also, where appropriate, more widely. Topics covered include: distribution, habitat and food (in Central Europe, Kites initially benefited from the clearance of primary forest and creation of extensive farmland, but the intensive agricultural methods of more recent years have had a negative effect on their foraging areas); breeding populations and densities, estimated winter populations; movements (migration routes and winter quarters and the gatherings of birds for resting or roosting during these periods). Directly or indirectly, human activities may present a significant threat to Kites, birds falling victim to road traffic, electrocution on power lines and pylons, wind turbines (it is suggested that Kites are more often killed or injured by rotor blades than any other raptor species), shooting (in certain countries) and poisoning. Two new threats and/or competitors (for nest-sites) in Germany are the introduced Raccoon *Procyon lotor* and the Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiacus*. Proposed measures deemed essential for the species' protection are securing and improving its food supply, reducing losses caused by man, and creating and safeguarding nest-sites in the open landscape.

M.G. Wilson

PEACOCK, F. **Chamberlain's LBJs. The Definitive Guide to Southern Africa's Little Brown Jobs.** 352 pages, numerous maps and colour illustrations throughout. Pretoria: Mirafr Publishing, 2012. Paperback, £34.99, ISBN 978-0-620-54320-0. Website (for enquiries and orders): <http://www.nhbs.com>.

This rather curiously entitled, strongly individualistic volume is, following Chittenden, Allan and Weiersbye's *Roberts Geographic Variation of Southern African Birds* (reviewed in *Ibis* 155: 685–686), with which there is a limited amount of overlap of content, the second innovative and significant ornithological publication to appear from the region in short order. The book's stated intention is to help birders identify, understand and enjoy the 'Little Brown Jobs' (LBJs) – defined as 'smallish, brownish, featureless birds which defy identification' – which make up, apparently, nearly a quarter of the region's avifauna and half of its endemics. Thus, some 230 species are included, both resident and non-breeding visitors, and covering the majority of the region's honeyguides (Indicatoridae), larks (Alaudidae), pipits *Anthus* spp. (Motacillidae), chats, robins and flycatchers (Muscicapidae), warblers (Sylviidae *sensu lato*) and cisticolas (Cisticolidae), sparrows (Passeridae), weavers and bishops (Ploceidae), whydahs and indigobirds (Vid-

uidae), canaries and seed-eaters (Fringillidae) and buntings (Emberizidae). While one might quibble about whether all included species really do merit the acronym LBJ, such is the overall standard of this work that few will, I suspect, object to its inclusivity.

This really is a remarkable solo effort by the author, for he is responsible for text, maps, artwork and, seemingly, design. Rather larger than octavo in size, at 352 pages and weighing over a kilogram, this is a substantial book, one for the car or home rather than the pocket. Nor is any space wasted; all the pages are 'busy', without feeling overcrowded, and come with many interesting, useful or downright quirky sections. These include a table showing the ranked relative abundance of the 30 most common LBJs, useful in assessing how plausible one's identification is likely to be, worked examples of possibilities when seeing something, say, warbler-, sparrow- or lark-like at different given localities, to show how the process of elimination narrows down the choice(s), a chart showing how *Cisticola* species divide (pretty) neatly into small and large group sizes on the basis of tail-length, and so on.

I have passed over the artwork but must return to it. Faansie Peacock is a considerable talent. Whether small comparative vignettes of jizz or larger, more formal studies, I find his illustrations both pleasing and persuasive. I think his lark plates are among the best I have seen and I welcome the inclusion, along with the sub-specific names, etc., of locality information from where the illustrations derive. Again, there are as many illustrations as needed to make the case clear – for some *Cisticola* species, for example, this means 10 or more birds per page, covering seasonal and subspecific variation, perched and in flight, from above and below. Elsewhere, display-flight patterns and sonograms, as appropriate, round out the text, which covers habitat, status, behaviour, voice, etc., as well as paragraphs on key identification features and confusion species.

In summary, if the author feels something, whether narrative, tabular or illustrative, can help aid identification, it has been included, such that treatment of each group is tailored to the specifics of that group, rather than a set formula being followed each time. It should be said, however, that this book is not the first of its kind for the region. It has more than one predecessor, including *LBJs: Little Brown Jobs Made Easier* by K. Newman *et al.* (Struik, 2000), which has the same basic premise and covers some of the same ground, albeit dealing with fewer aspects and fewer species, in less detail, and, more recently, *Southern African LBJs Made Simple* by D. Newman and G. King (Random House Struik, 2011). If, therefore, the author cannot claim originality for the idea – which is not to suggest that he does, although, strangely, these earlier volumes are not included in the short list of references – he has expanded, adapted and developed it to a very consider-

able degree. I do not feel qualified to assess to what extent the book includes new data or original insights, as opposed to 'simply' bringing together existing information in such an imaginative and comprehensive way. However, the blurb on the back cover says the author 'lives and breathes birds'; this is easy to believe, for the contents shout of someone who has enormous personal field experience of his subjects. Faansie Peacock and the hardware company Chamberlain, who sponsor the book (as well as seemingly claim proprietorship for these birds!), have produced a fine work, at once aesthetically pleasing and of considerable utility.

Lincoln Fishpool

SAUROLA, P., VALKAMA, J. & VELMALA, W. **Suomen Rengastusatlas I. The Finnish Bird Ringing Atlas, Vol. 1.** (In Finnish, with summaries and captions in English.) 551 pages, species portraits by Dick Forsman, many maps, colour and black-and-white photographs, diagrams and tables. Helsinki: Finnish Museum of Natural History and Ministry of the Environment, 2013. Hardback, €50.00, ISBN 978-952-10-8572-7. Website (Museum): <http://www.luomus.fi>.

This weighty tome is the first of what will probably be three volumes summarizing the results of bird ringing in Finland over the period 1913–2007. Considering the size of the country, and its human population, there are a lot of results to report. In all, more than 10 million birds have been ringed and more than 1 million recovered. Ringing is perhaps more of a competitive sport in Finland than in some other countries; an award is offered annually for 'ringer of the year', and some past heroes are immortalized in a section on 'legendary ringers'. The portrait of one hero reveals a face blood-stained from an encounter with a Ural Owl *Strix uralensis*. The current volume covers waterfowl, gallinaceous birds, divers (Gaviidae) and grebes (Podicipedidae), Northern Gannet *Morus bassanus* and Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*, Great Bittern *Botaurus stellaris* and Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*, diurnal raptors, crakes and rails (Rallidae), waders, and skuas (Stercorariidae) – some 125 species in all. An important feature of the book is that much of the text and all the captions of figures and tables are presented in both Finnish and English, so the book can be widely used outside its country of origin.

The volume begins with several introductory chapters, describing the importance of bird ringing and the questions that it answers, the history of bird ringing in general and in Finland in particular, other marking methods (including satellite tracking as illustrated by maps of Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* migration routes), and the analysis and presentation of data. The bulk of the book is taken up by individual species accounts, in which the findings are summarized mainly in a series of maps, dia-

grams and tables, showing: (1) annual ringing totals through time; (2) spatial distributions of birds ringed; (3) finding conditions (pie-chart); (4) death causes (pie-chart); (5) geographical distributions of recoveries; (6) temporal trends in the proportions of ringed birds recovered, and the proportions killed intentionally; (7) recoveries at different latitudes at different times of year; (8) maps of recoveries obtained during autumn migration, winter and spring migration, respectively; (9) circular diagram of autumn migration directions judged from ring recoveries; (10) breeding-season maps and diagrams showing natal and other dispersal; (11) age distribution of recoveries, and (12) numbers of birds ringed and recovered, with other details, including extremes of age, migration distance and location. For some species, such as the Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*, other diagrams are given, too, such as the timing of passage through bird observatories, as indicated by numbers caught there on different dates. These diagrams and maps are attractively presented and easy to understand; they are supported by up to several pages of text. For most species, the numbers ringed have increased progressively over recent decades, as expected, but the proportion recovered has fallen fairly sharply. One reason for some of this decline is that fewer birds are being shot or trapped than in the past, or those that are now shot illegally are seldom reported.

As always with this type of book, much of the data presented could be analysed in greater detail by interested specialists, and many pleasant hours can be spent poring over the maps and diagrams, from which there is much to learn. It is striking how many individuals of some species have been ringed in Finland, with some annual totals exceeding 150 in European Honey Buzzards *Pernis apivorus*, 200 in White-tailed Eagles *Haliaeetus albicilla*, 2000 in Northern Goshawks *Accipiter gentilis*, 1000 in Common Buzzards *Buteo buteo*, and 1300 Ospreys, the latter resulting from a special programme led by the senior author. Most of these birds were ringed as nestlings, so imagine all the trees that were climbed to get them. Recoveries of birds ringed elsewhere and recovered in Finland are not presented, but could presumably have added considerably to the picture for some species.

The three authors are all life-time ornithologists well equipped to compile this book. Pertti Sauroala was Head of the Finnish Ringing Centre during 1974–2001, President of EURING during 1981–95, and an impressive bird ringer in his own right, concentrating on raptors and owls. Jari Valkama became Head of the Ringing Centre in 2002, as another ringer, and soon became the leader of the Monitoring Team for the Third Finnish Breeding Bird Atlas (completed 2011), and William Velmala is a PhD student at the University of Turku, having been a ringer for more than 20 years, working mainly at bird observatories in Finland and elsewhere.

The book is attractive and well produced on good-quality paper, adorned by well-chosen photographs and by the beautiful paintings and drawings of Dick Forsman. In my view it is one of the best, and most easily usable, of the European Atlases produced so far, and I eagerly await the next volume.

Ian Newton

WILLIAMS, D.R., POPLÉ, R.G., SHOWLER, D.A., DICKS, L.V., CHILD, M.F., ZU ERMGASSEN, E.K.H.J. & SUTHERLAND, W.J. **Bird Conservation: Global Evidence for the Effects of Interventions. (Synopsis of Conservation Evidence Series.)** xvi + 575 pages, numerous text boxes. Exeter: Pelagic Publishing, 2013. Paperback, £34.99, ISBN 978-1-907807-19-0. Hardback, £59.99, ISBN 978-1-907807-20-6. Websites: <http://www.pelagicpublishing.com>, <http://www.conservazionevidence.com>.

Bird Conservation is the second volume in a series that is part of an ongoing effort to make biodiversity conservation more evidence-based. The opening pages outline the Conservation Evidence project, who the series might appeal to, and how it links to other similar initiatives, such as the Centre for Evidence-Based Conservation at the University of Bangor. The overall approach of taking what is increasingly complex scientific research (especially the wealth of sophisticated data-analysis techniques) and trying to distil this down to the key issues for the end-user is admirable. Too often, excellent research has not been applied by the conservation practitioner because the outputs are not readily available in an accessible format. This book brings together scientific evidence and experience relevant to the practical conservation of wild birds and lists 322 interventions that could be of benefit. In addition, the reader is pointed to further information that is available on-line through the Conservation Evidence project.

The wealth of information that is contained in this book is summarized in a very user-friendly way, with a standard structure throughout each chapter. Conservation interventions are grouped by threats according to the standard definition used by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN). Inevitably, there are overlaps where interventions could occur in several parts of the book, but the authors take a pragmatic approach in assigning the most suitable place and providing clear cross-referencing. Each chapter has a succinct summary and background, with an excellent overview of the key messages the reader should note. Jargon is avoided, as is the data analysis behind the results that are summarized, and this makes the accounts very readable by the average conservation practitioner and land manager.

Perhaps inevitably, the book is dominated by a few key threats, notably agriculture (Chapter 5), stretching

to 100 pages, and invasive alien and other problematic species (Chapter 12; 74 pages). Others are more limited in scope, for example the threats of energy production and climate change are covered in a total of just over two pages (although interventions are cross-referenced elsewhere). The breadth of interventions within the book is staggering. Where else would you bring together the use of snakeskin to deter mammalian nest predators and the use of lime to reduce acidification in lakes? The authors make no attempt to assess the evidence quantitatively but they do provide readers with sufficient information to make their own judgements that will be applicable to their own situation.

The only criticism of the book is that it comes to a rather abrupt end. There could have been some merit in a summary of what the authors think are the key overarching messages from all the interventions listed; or indeed, an assessment of what the key gaps are in our knowledge of bird conservation interventions, and how these could be addressed in the future. Had such a summary been written by the ultimate end-user of this book, it might have further contributed to bringing scientists and conservation practitioners together. For future *Synopsis of Conservation Evidence* it may be worth considering adding a few practitioners to the Advisory Board. Overall, this is an outstanding book (and an excellent concept) that will make a significant contribution to evidence-based bird conservation, and I hope there will be many future editions allowing conservation practitioners to be right up to date with current scientific research.

Robert Sheldon

YÉSOU, P., BACCETTI, N. & SULTANA, J. (eds) **Ecology and Conservation of Mediterranean Seabirds and Other Bird Species under the Barcelona Convention: Update & Progress. Proceedings of the 13th Medmaravis pan-Mediterranean Symposium, Alghero, Sardinia, Italy, 14–17 October 2011.** 232 pages, numerous (black-and-white and colour) figures, and tables. Alghero: Medmaravis, 2012. Paperback, ISBN 975-99957-0-344-8. Publication not for sale, but institutes or libraries wishing to acquire a copy may contact Nicola Baccetti (Chairman of Medmaravis), nicola.baccetti@isprambiente.it. The Proceedings can also be downloaded: http://www.parcodiportoconte.it/public/dots/medmaravis_proceedings17_01_2013.pdf.

This publication comprises papers presented as talks and posters at the 13th symposium of Medmaravis, an international NGO established to enhance the study and conservation of marine avifauna and coastal habitats throughout the Mediterranean. It was held in Alghero, Sardinia, to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the first symposium, which also took place there.

I was lucky enough to participate in that first symposium and it is interesting to compare the Proceedings from that meeting with this publication a quarter of a century later. The first obvious difference is that it is a much slicker production, now including lots of colour maps and illustrations. There are also many more contributions. Several of these make use of new technologies such as GPS tags and geolocators to study movements at sea. Artificial nestboxes have been installed for the study of burrow-nesting species such as the Mediterranean subspecies of European Storm-petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus melitensis*, and a distance-sampling technique employed to count occupied shearwater burrows. Nomenclature has also changed over those years, with the Mediterranean (nominat) subspecies of Cory's Shearwater now being treated as a separate species, Scopoli's Shearwater *Calonectris diomedea*, and the Levantine race (*yelkouan*) of Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus* similarly as Yelkouan Shearwater *Puffinus yelkouan*. From a conservation perspective, with the aid of DNA analysis, it pays to split.

Thirty-seven extended summaries are presented in five sections addressing different themes, 13 in the first part being devoted to the population ecology and conservation of shearwaters. GPS tagging of both Scopoli's and Yelkouan Shearwaters has revealed interesting differences in core foraging areas used and duration of foraging trip with breeding colony location and stage of the reproductive cycle, while geolocators have helped investigate large-scale movements outside the breeding season, revealing distinct wintering grounds for different individual Scopoli's Shearwaters off NW Africa, the Gulf of Guinea, and Brazil despite breeding in the same locality. Line transects using distance sampling are employed for the world's largest colony of Scopoli's Shearwater on Zembra Island (Tunisia), resulting in a new estimate of more than 140 000 breeding pairs, 10 times that of the previous one. New global population estimates are presented for this species and for Cory's Shearwater *Calonectris borealis*, and a reassessment is made of the population size of Yelkouan Shearwater at the world's largest colony (c. 10 000–13 500 breeding pairs) at Tavolara (Sardinia), using afternoon counts of flying birds along with censuses of occupied burrows. Satellite tagging of Yelkouan Shearwaters breeding in Malta has shown post-fledging dispersal into the eastern Mediterranean and then down to the North African coast, where they move westwards along the Egyptian, Libyan and Tunisian coasts. The global population size of this species is estimated at 46 000–99 000 individuals, and yet counts through the Bosphorus at Istanbul (Turkey), indicate the passage of up to 55 700 birds in one morning.

Balearic Shearwater *Puffinus mauretanicus* is another species thought to be underestimated when counts at sea are compared with breeding colony estimates, even

taking into account a sizeable non-breeding element. It has been considered the most threatened of Europe's seabirds, with an estimate of 3200 breeding pairs and an overall global population (including non-breeders) of 8000–15 000 birds. However, boat-based surveys at sea and coastal counts of migrating birds suggest a conservative estimate of 25 000 birds. Visual monitoring and tracking studies have shown how mainly non-breeding Balearic Shearwaters utilize the coastal waters off northwest Portugal, southwest Brittany and the southwest UK in summer and autumn, with some indication of a northwards shift in distribution in recent years.

The second part of this publication comprises just four papers on the ecology and conservation of the Mediterranean Storm-petrel and Mediterranean Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis desmarestii*. From nest visits and ringing, the breeding biology, longevity and movements of Storm-petrels in Malta are described along with the major threat from the increasing Yellow-legged Gull *Larus michahellis* colony. At Benidorm Island in Spain, conservation of the species has been greatly enhanced by selective culling of the Gulls and the installation of plastic nestboxes. Shags in the Mediterranean, on the other hand, face threats from fisheries (both bycatch and overfishing of prey). Dietary studies are presented for Shags from the upper Adriatic and indicate a wider range of species taken during the breeding season than in the Atlantic, but more specialization, particularly on gobies (Gobiidae), after breeding. At this time in the Gulf of Trieste, large aggregations of 2000–4000 Shags forage in the area, making up more than half the Adriatic breeding population.

Twelve papers in the third part focus on ecology and conservation of gulls and terns (Laridae). Some gull species, e.g. Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*, have expanded their range in recent decades and ringing has been useful to chart the importance of particular locations as wintering or stopover sites. Audouin's Gull *Larus audouinii* has a restricted breeding range and has required major conservation actions to reverse population declines. This has included habitat management, hatchling release programmes, and control of predators, along with gaining new information by research and monitoring, including ringing studies. The only paper on terns reviews the state of knowledge and population trends of Lesser Crested Terns *Sterna bengalensis* in the Mediterranean. Up to 2400 of the Mediterranean subspecies (*emigrata*) are believed to breed in the region, with islands off the coast of Libya the only area regularly occupied; these breeding sites are being monitored and nestlings ringed.

Five papers on the ecology and conservation of other bird species of concern under the Barcelona Convention make up part 4. These include Eleonora's Falcon *Falco eleonora*, Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* and Greater

Flamingo *Phoenicopterus roseus*, with conservation-oriented studies at breeding sites and foraging areas.

The fifth and final part of the book summarizes the results of surveys and conservation at the national and regional level. Mediterranean-wide maps show the distribution of breeding sites of seven vulnerable seabird and raptor species. The current status of six seabird species breeding in a Croatian nature park is reviewed and conservation actions (such as rat eradication and identification of Important Bird Areas) are outlined for the Mediterranean Shag and Audouin's Gull in Greece.

I found this to be an excellent read, both interesting and stimulating. All concerned should be congratulated for their efforts and for presenting a volume that anyone interested in Mediterranean seabirds should definitely own.

Peter G.H. Evans

Also received

BELIK, V.P. (ed.) **Strepet: Fauna, Ekologiya i Okhrana Ptits Yuzhnoy Palearktiki [The Little Bustard: Status, Ecology and Conservation of Southern Palearctic Birds]. Volume 10(2).** (In Russian, with English Contents, abstracts and some captions.) 164 pages, black-and-white figures (including photographs) and tables. Rostov-on-Don: South Federal University, 2012. ISSN 1992-2361. Contact email: Dr V. P. Belik, vpbelik@mail.ru.

To mark the 10th anniversary of the launch of *Strepet*, this issue contains a complete Table of Contents for the years 2003–12. Of considerable interest in Volume 10 (2) is V. P. Belik's paper (pp. 67–92) on the Olivaceous Warbler *Iduna [Hippolais] pallida* in the Caucasus which describes its distribution, including range expansion from Transcaucasia to eastern Ciscaucasia and, still continuing, to the north and west. Much useful information is also provided on habitat, population, movements and breeding biology, and comparisons are made with Booted Warbler *Iduna caligata* and Sykes's Warbler *Iduna rama*, the three members of this genus being difficult to identify. Another long article (pp. 93–116) is N. N. Efimenko's review of the distribution, breeding ecology, current population size (122–143 pairs) and conservation of the Long-legged Buzzard *Buteo rufinus* in Turkmenistan.

There are further contributions on upland forest birds and those of the Terek-Kuma interfluvium in the Stavropol' Region, notes on birds seen on a journey through Spain in 1995, and proposed additions to the Red Data Book for South Ossetia; also four short communications.

M.G.W.

DEUTSCHE AVIFAUNISTISCHE KOMMISSION (DAK) (eds) **Seltene Vögel in Deutschland 2010.** (In German, with summaries and captions in English.) 72 pages, colour photographs, other figures (graphs, maps) and tables. Münster: Dachverband Deutscher Avifaunisten (DDA), 2012. Paperback, €9.80 + postage from DDA-Schriftenversand, attn. Thomas Thissen, An den Speichern 4a, D-48157 Münster, Germany or schriftenversand@dda-web.de. ISSN 2192-2620. Website: <http://www.dda-web.de>.

A German Rarities Committee with the acronym BSA was established in the 1970s and was then restructured by its Chairman Peter H. Barthel as the Deutsche Seltenheitenkommission (DSK) in 1988. Following Barthel's resignation as Chairman in 2010 and an agreement between the DSK, the German Ornithological Society (DO-G) and the DDA (see above), it was decided that the DAK (German Avifaunistic Commission) should continue the work of the DSK as an essentially independent expert committee within the DDA.

Hitherto published in the journal *Limicola*, annual reports on rare birds in Germany will in future appear as *Seltene Vögel in Deutschland*, these bearing a close resemblance to the *Vögel in Deutschland* status reports reviewed below. This well-illustrated first report contains, in addition to the 'Rare bird species in Germany' report for 2010, a revised list of species and subspecies considered by the DAK, more information about the regional Avifaunistic Commissions and articles on the occurrence of Baillon's Crake *Porzana pusilla* and Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica*.

M.G.W.

HILBERS, D. & TEN CATE, B. **North-East Poland: Biebrza, Białowieża, Narew and Wigry. (Crossbill Guides.)** 248 pages, numerous photographs, maps and text boxes, in colour throughout. Arnhem, The Netherlands: Crossbill Guides in association with KNNV Publishing, 2013. Paperback, €24.95, ISBN 978-94-91648-00-7. Websites: <http://www.crossbillguides.org>, <http://www.knnvpublishing.nl>.

HILBERS, D., TABAK, A., Vliegenthart, A. & Dierickx, H. **Eastern Rhodopes: Nestos, Evros and Dadia – Bulgaria and Greece.** 256 pages. ISBN 978-94-91648-01-4. Other details as above.

Through its books, well produced and with a wealth of superb photographs, the Crossbill Guides Foundation aims to introduce more people to Europe's beautiful

natural heritage and to increase understanding of ecology and conservation. The Guides comprise a descriptive and a practical part, the first of these having (under the rubric 'Landscape') a geographical overview and chapters on geology, hydrology, climate, habitats and – a particularly valuable feature and essential reading – history and conservation. There follow descriptions of the flora and fauna (mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians, insects and other invertebrates). The practical part consists of recommended routes through the most interesting parts of the region and a section entitled 'Tourist information and observation tips', in which a wide range of relevant topics are discussed.

Anyone planning to visit either of the regions covered in these two additions to the series would be well advised to purchase a copy of the relevant Guide. North-east Poland (roughly corresponding to the province of Podlasie) borders on Belarus, Lithuania and Russia and contains the country's most famous National Parks of Białowieża (the last near-primeval forest of lowland Europe) and, also the largest, Biebrza (the floodplain of the Biebrza and Narew rivers), while the huge and pine-dominated Augustów Forest, part of it protected in the Wigry National Park, lies north of there. The free-roaming European Bison *Bison bonasus* of Białowieża demand to be mentioned and birds found there include various raptors and woodpeckers (Picidae). The Guide presents Biebrza as 'Poland's top bird-watching region' and 'a must-see site for any European naturalist'. Among its many avian attractions are Great Snipe *Gallinago media* and Aquatic Warbler *Acrocephalus paludicola*.

The Rhodope Mountains form the border between Bulgaria and Greece and the second of these new Crossbill Guides covers the lower eastern section (in Bulgaria) and an adjacent (northeastern) part of Greece that includes the Thracian Plain and enormously rich coastal wetlands (Nestos, Evros). Dadia Forest (see review of Catsadorakis & Källander 2010 in *Ibis* 155: 434–435) and the cliffs of Madzharovo (Arda river gorge) are renowned for their exceptional diversity of raptors and, similarly, more species of amphibians and reptiles are found in the Eastern Rhodopes and coastal plain of Greece than anywhere else in Europe. The possibility of seeing such species as Spur-winged Plover *Vanellus spinosus*, Isabelline Wheatear *Oenanthe isabellina*, Sombre Tit *Poecile lugubris*, Western Rock Nuthatch *Sitta neumayer* and Masked Shrike *Lanius nubicus* in their different habitats may encourage more people to visit what is a relatively unexplored corner of the Balkans.

M.G.W.

JOHNSON, S. & VAGG, R. **Survival: Saving Endangered Migratory Species**. 168 pages, 159 colour photographs, one map and one table. Northampton, MA: Interlink Books, 2010. Hardback, US\$50.00, ISBN 978-1-56656-819-7. Websites: <http://www.interlink-books.com>, <http://www.stacey-international.co.uk>.

This is a large-format 'coffee-table' book with a conservation message linked to the United Nations Environment Programme's Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), to which all royalties are donated by the authors. The book is divided into four chapters (with seven supporting appendices), covering birds (15 species and one family), aquatic species (12 species), terrestrial species (14 species and one group of species) and threats and challenges (eight 'key' threats identified). It undoubtedly contains some excellent photographic images, although some of them are incorrectly labelled, e.g. there is a photograph of Barnacle Geese *Branta leucopsis* in flight on pp. 34–35; overleaf (p. 36), text for Brent Goose *Branta bernicla* is placed opposite another photograph of Barnacle Geese.

Perhaps more importantly, the criteria by which species were selected for inclusion are not explained, leading to confusion as to why some species are represented (e.g. Eurasian Eagle-owl *Bubo bubo* – a species not currently listed by CMS) – and others are not. The text is inconsistent at best, with statements such as 'Some swallows famously migrate from the Arctic circle to the Antarctic...' (p. 31) opposite a photograph of a Common Tern *Sterna hirundo* (incorrectly labelled on p. 32 as Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*) – Arctic Terns (sometimes referred to as 'sea swallows') may do this, but I know of no swallow that does. It is a shame that the excellent images in the book are not reflected in more informative text relating to the title of the book: that for the Brown Long-eared Bat *Plecotus auritus*, for example, does little more than summarize what could be found in a field guide. The chapter on threats and challenges is woefully inadequate and lacking a strong structure. For example, despite a separate subheading dealing with the issue of 'Climate change', albeit very inadequately (p. 133), global warming is also discussed under 'Habitat Loss'. As with the species selection, there appear to be no criteria by which the severity of threats is judged. At best, this misses the opportunity to support key conservation messages and at the other end of the spectrum contains misleading, or even incorrect information. Statements contained within this chapter are supported by very little evidence: the sole example given of an arctic tundra species on which 'the northward shift of forests is having a severe impact' is the Spoon-billed Sandpiper *Calidris [Eurynorhynchus] pygmeus*. Given the evidence that does exist for this species, this is strange indeed.

D.K.S.

MICHEV, T., SIMEONOV, D. & PROFIROV, L. **Ptitsite na Balkanskiya Polustrov: Polevi Opredelitel [Birds of the Balkan Peninsula: A Field Guide]. 2nd revised and enlarged edn.** (In Bulgarian, with summary in English.) 300 pages, 109 colour plates by Georgi Pchelarov, photographs and maps (including relief and vegetation on endpapers); 1 CD. Sofiya: EKOTAN EOOD, 2012. Hardback, 35.00 ₪ [leva], ISBN 978-954-92930-1-2. Contact email (for authors): ecotan@ecotan.bg. Website: <http://www.birdsinbulgaria.org>.

Since publication of the first edition of this guide (Simeonov, S. & Michev, T. *Ptitsite na Balkanskiya Poluostrov: Polevi Opredelitel*, Sofiya: Petar Beron, 1991), about 100 new species (most of them vagrants) have been recorded in the countries of the Balkan Peninsula, so that 516 are treated in the new edition which, as indicated in the English summary (and as I can just about tease out of the Bulgarian introductory text), is aimed at 'beginners' in a number of different, potentially interested categories. Over some 40 pages leading up to the species accounts, the first part of the book contains much detailed information about the Balkan Peninsula (geography, climate, flora, fauna), watching birds (when and how), their conservation status, migration and ringing, photography, a code of conduct, and so on. Among items on the CD are a 2009 list of birds recorded in Bulgaria and checklists for the Balkan Peninsula as a whole and for individual Balkan states, a Red List of the birds of Bulgaria' (Michev, T. et al. (2011) Scientific papers from *Man and the Universe Conference*, Smolyan, Bulgaria, October 6th–8th, 2011), a map of Bulgarian wetlands and *Midwinter Numbers of Waterbirds in Bulgaria (1977–2001)* by T. Michev and L. Profirov (Sofiya: Pensoft Publishers, 2003).

Two somewhat contrasting styles are evident in G. Pchelarov's paintings, but the overall standard is good or very good and the background details add greatly to the authentic portrayal of the birds and the aesthetic appeal of the plates. Opposite the plates are clear maps with well-chosen use of colour and texts with Bulgarian, English and scientific names, field characters and current distribution data. The conservation status of 155 species (their names and IUCN category marked in red) follows the 2nd edition of the Bulgarian Red Data Book (Michev *et al.* 2011). Balkan countries holding significant populations of 231 species and thus ranked in the top ten in Europe are marked TTE.

An English translation of this excellent guide is known to be in preparation and its publication, probably in 2014, will surely be welcomed.

M.G.W.

RUSEV, I.T. & KORZYUKOV, A.I. (eds) **Ridkisini i znikayuchi ptaki pivnichno-zakhidnogo Prichornomor'ya [Rare and Threatened Birds of the Northwestern Black Sea Coastal Region]. Collected Scientific Papers.** (In Ukrainian and Russian.) 120 pages, black-and-white figures and tables. Odesa [Odessa]: Ukrayins'ke Tovaristvo Okhoroni Ptakhiv [Ukrainian Society for the Protection of Birds], 2011. Paperback, price not given. No ISBN. Website: <http://www.birdlife.org.ua>.

Of the 18 papers dedicated to the 90th anniversary of the birth of the Ukrainian ornithologist Leonid Ferapontovich Nazarenko in this collection, 14 are in Russian and four in Ukrainian. Study sites include the Lower Dnepr [Dnieper] River, Zmeinyy [Serpent] Island (a five-volume work on this island was reviewed in *Ibis* 153: 907), the basin of the Southern Bug River, the 'Askaniya Nova', Black Sea and Danube Biosphere Reserves, and Lakes Putrino (Dnestr Delta) and Sasyk (Odessa Region). There are reports on the nesting of three raptor species on electricity pylons; remarkable roosting assemblages (10 000–15 000, peaking at 21 000 in 2009) of Red-footed Falcons *Falco vespertinus* in the south of Ukraine during the autumn passage period; the return of the White-tailed Eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla* to the Dnestr Delta; and up to c. 1500 wintering Whooper Swans *Cygnus cygnus*, increasingly feeding on fields of oilseed rape and winter wheat.

M.G.W.

SCHNEIDER-JACOBY, M. & STUMBERGER, B. **Adriatic East Coast: Seeing Birds and Experiencing Nature in Historic Landscapes on the Mediterranean Coast. (EuroNatur Travel Guides.)** 268 pages, numerous colour photographs, maps, text boxes, 1 other figure, 1 table. Radolfzell, Germany: EuroNatur Service GmbH, 2012. Paperback, €24.80, ISBN 978-3-00-035952-1. Website: <http://www.euronatur.org>.

EuroNatur (originally, the European Nature Heritage Fund) was founded in 1987 and is known especially for its work in support of migratory birds. This Travel Guide, 'not exclusively, but especially for readers interested in birds', was first published in German in 2011. It reveals the natural riches of the Eastern Adriatic coast from Slovenia in the north, through Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Montenegro to Albania and emphasizes the area's huge significance as the Adriatic Flyway. Following a number of research projects undertaken since 2003, Euronatur is now striving to secure protection for wetlands and migratory bird areas along the Flyway. Apart from the threat posed by large-scale habitat destruction, bird hunting remains a massive problem.

Much as in the Crossbill Guides reviewed above, this Travel Guide has chapters on 'Earth, air and water' (underground rivers, clay-lined floodplains, etc.), 'History and culture', 'Flora', 'Fauna' (all four bird subsections concentrate on migration), 'Threats and conservation' (including the potential benefits of a network of nature parks) and 'Travel information' (the usual topics, but also necessary warnings about bad roads and the possibility of encountering minefields). Among nearly 30 sites described in detail are the Sečovlje Soline saltworks in Slovenia, islands off the Croatian coast, the Neretva delta (Croatia/Bosnia-Herzegovina), Mostarsko Blato [swamp] and, oscillating between 370 and more than 600 km², Lake Scutari on the border between Montenegro and Albania. Magnificent scenery along the coast, further inland and higher up, supports a wide range of bird species, some in impressive numbers, but the picture of Alpine *Apus melba*, Common *A. apus* and Pallid Swifts *A. pallidus* over the old town of Dubrovnik, UNESCO World Cultural Heritage site, may also stand as a symbol of what the Eastern Adriatic has to offer and should be valued and protected.

M.G.W.

SUDFELDT, C., DRÖSCHMEISTER, R., GRÜNEBERG, C., MITSCHKE, A., SCHÖPF, H. & WAHL, J. **Vögel in Deutschland – 2007**. 40 pages, numerous colour photographs, figures and tables. Münster: Dachverband Deutscher Avifaunisten (DDA), Bundesamt für Naturschutz (BfN), Länderarbeitsgemeinschaft der Vogelschutzwarten (LAG VSW), 2007. Paperback, €5.00 + postage from DDA-Schriftenversand, schriftenversand@dda-web.de, or as free download from websites: <http://www.dda-web.de>, <http://www.bfn.de>, <http://www.NABU.de>; ISBN 978-3-9811698-1-2.

SUDFELDT, C., DRÖSCHMEISTER, R., GRÜNEBERG, C., JAEHNE, S., MITSCHKE, A. & WAHL, J. **Vögel in Deutschland – 2008**. 46 pages. ISBN 978-3-9811698-3-6. Other details as above.

SUDFELDT, C., DRÖSCHMEISTER, R., FLADE, M., GRÜNEBERG, C., MITSCHKE, A., SCHWARZ, J. & WAHL, J. **Vögel in Deutschland – 2009**. 68 pages. €7.00 + postage. ISBN 978-3-9811698-5-0. Other details as above.

SUDFELDT, C., DRÖSCHMEISTER, R., LANGGEMACH, T. & WAHL, J. **Vögel in Deutschland – 2010**. 56 pages. €7.00 + postage. ISBN 978-3-9811698-6-7. Other details as above.

Vögel in Deutschland [Birds in Germany] – 2011 was reviewed in *Ibis* 155: 447. The first four in this series of status reports similarly contain a mass of information clearly and attractively presented: population trends of 64 common breeding species from 1990; endangered species; birds as bioindicators (sustainability of land use); waterbirds at spring and autumn stopovers and wintering sites; threats to long-distance migrants and the importance of the Bonn Convention; the European Birds Directive (EBD) and population status of Appendix 1 species; the Natura 2000 network of European Protected Areas in various habitats and introduced/alien species in Germany.

The report for 2010 is devoted almost entirely to a discussion of how Germany is to meet the 2020 biodiversity targets arising out of the Convention on Biological Diversity in Nagoya (Japan) in the autumn of 2010. Consideration is given, *inter alia*, to habitat loss and fragmentation, overfishing (bycatch, reduced food supply), biofuels, reducing the use of pesticides and fertilizers, the urgent action required to improve the status of formerly common species (above all, farmland birds), the role of the German National Strategy on Biodiversity (2007) to halt the persistent loss of species diversity (with a focus on seven species, including Red Kite *Milvus milvus*, for which Germany has special responsibility); and the need to improve education – from the identification skills of children to a greater knowledge and appreciation of the environment, ecology and biodiversity.

M.G.W.

Sound recordings

ELPHICK, J., PEDERSEN, J. & SVENSSON, L. **Birdsong – 150 British and Irish Birds and their Amazing Sounds**. 256 pages, 163 colour photographs, 81 colour illustrations, attached sound module with 184 audio recordings (totalling approximately 22 min). London: Quadrille Publishing Ltd, 2012. Hardback, £30.00, ISBN 978-1-84949-134-1. Website: <http://www.quadrille.co.uk>.

Birdsong is a bird book with a difference. It combines features of an identification guide with those of a coffee-table book, complete with sumptuous photographs, but what sets it apart is its ability to reproduce some of the sounds of the 150 chosen species. Those with young children will be familiar with the concept of books providing sound effects at the push of a button. *Birdsong* is the first 'grown-up' version I have come across, the sounds being produced by a 'sound module' attached to an extension of the book's back cover. Pedersen and Svensson's Swedish original, *Fågelsång: 150 svenska fåglar och deras läten*, was published by Bokförlaget Max Ström (Stockholm, 2011).

The introductory chapter starts with two pages entitled 'Music with purpose', summarizing the basics of avian vocal behaviour, explaining the difference between song and calls, then listing different call categories. After some notes of instruction on use of the sound module (barely necessary owing to its simple and intuitive design) and a two-page section headed 'Names and plumage', the remainder of the book is almost entirely devoted to individual species accounts. As well as the species description itself, each includes notes on behaviour, habitat and distribution (though no map). The well-written text is often conversational and at times almost poetic, making for easy reading. As expected, there is some bias towards species with more distinctive, or musical, voices, so passerines are more fully represented than, for example, ducks. Considering the title, voice descriptions are unexpectedly brief.

Species accounts are accompanied by at least one sizeable, and often particularly striking, photograph of the bird. Though sometimes chosen primarily for aesthetic quality, rather than value for identification, photographs are supplemented, in 80 of the species, by smaller coloured illustrations.

The AAA battery-powered sound module has buttons for the selection and playback of 184 sound recordings, a volume control, integrated loudspeaker and small LCD screen indicating the chosen track number. The sounds of a species are found by matching this number with the corresponding one(s) given on the page describing that bird (track numbers are not listed in the index). It takes only a few seconds to scroll to any desired track. Sound quality is generally similar to a mobile phone in 'speaker-mode', so though it is mostly adequate for the intended purpose of voice recognition, it is less than ideal for prolonged listening. However, species fare differently, depending upon the acoustic characteristics of their voice. In one or two instances, sound quality is not good enough to enable ready identification.

Although some species, such as Blackbird *Turdus merula*, are represented by a few different vocalizations, others have only a lone example from their repertoire. Some commonly heard sounds, such as Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs* calls or the alarm of the Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*, thus do not feature, these species being represented by song alone. Recording durations range from less than 3 s, up to almost 30 s per species. The longer samples include useful information on the overall pattern of delivery (whether a vocalization is uttered intermittently or more continuously, in a stereotypical or ever-changing pattern) but the shorter ones do not, diminishing their value for identification. Aside from the distinct fun-factor, perhaps the most useful function of many of the recordings is thus to jog one's memory.

Although current technology does impose limitations, the self-contained nature of *Birdsong*, where sounds are rapidly accessible alongside the book and without the need for any additional playback devices, is particularly appealing. This is an attractive and enjoyable publication that will encourage an interest in birds in a wide audience, including inquisitive children.

W.T.C. Seale

RIEK, L.-M. Helgoland. (Field Recording Series.) Audio CD (16 tracks, 47 minutes) in card case, 21-page insert, German and English text, 11 colour photographs. Hanau, Germany: Gruenrekorder, 2013. €16.50 + p&p, EAN 4050486090657. Website: <http://www.gruenrekorder.de>.

Helgoland (in English, Heligoland) is a dramatic acoustic portrayal of Germany's only oceanic island (archipelago). Lasse-Marc Riek has embraced the dynamic sounds of wind and sea, giving many of the recordings a wild, desolate feel. They thus capture the general ambience of the location as much as the sounds of its wildlife. All but one are in stereo and, considering the often challenging conditions under which they were made, they are technically very well executed.

Dominant species, often en masse, include Guillemot *Uria aalge*, Northern Gannet *Morus bassanus*, Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*, Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*, Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*, Grey Seal *Halichoerus grypus* and Great Green Bush-cricket *Tettigonia viridissima*. Those seeking more detailed information on Heligoland's birds may consult *Die Vogelwelt Helgolands* (Dierschke *et al.* 2011), which was reviewed in *Ibis* 154: 909–910.

Apart from a little background jangling during a recording of blowing sand, the recordings are free from any significant man-made noise, with one notable exception. The final track opens with an aircraft engine, before the sound of a sleeping seal takes over.

The insert includes photographs of the location, some of its wildlife and the sound-recorder at work (complete with hard hat). There are short texts by Stefan Militzer, Cheryl Tipp of the British Library and Tobias Fischer, editor of the online music magazine *tokafi*, giving background information and discussing the artistic merits of the piece.

This is likely to appeal to lovers of the cacophony of seabird colonies, the affecting cries of seals and the evocative, untamed sounds of remote locations.

W.T.C. Seale