

at the end of the book rather than at the end of the individual chapters. Although this undoubtedly minimizes repetition, some readers may find delving through the substantial bibliography inconvenient, especially if intending to photocopy a particular chapter of interest.

Overall, this monograph is a masterly summary and review of the status of the birds of Hawaii. It covers the gamut of conservation and management issues regarding these, but do not attempt to read it cover to cover. Because the book comes in the form of a series of scientific papers, it is not (and is not intended to be) a textbook for the Conservation Biology student. It will be more at home on the ornithologist's bookshelf. However, as a companion volume to such a textbook it would serve as an invaluable reference that provides real case histories of the real issues and logistics involved in the conservation of not one, but many species on a rapid decline. It is of interest not only to the ornithological researcher or post-graduate, but to any such worker involved with endangered species because the problems are universal, not specific.

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Conservation in the Internet Age: Threats and Opportunities

Levitt, J. N. (ed) (2002)
Island Press Publications, Washington DC USA.
364 Pp., ISBN 1-55963-913-X (pbk)
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WHEN I opened the package from *Pacific Conservation Biology* and looked at the book that I was to do my first review on, my first thought was "What have I got myself into". I was looking at a collection of papers that were written by experts in various fields, of which I knew nothing about. As I prepared to slog through all the technical information about networks and social interactions, I realized that this was not just a collection of technical papers, but a well-constructed look at how the Internet has and will affect the way conservation occurs across the globe over the next few decades.

This textbook, as it is more suited to the classroom instead of the bedside table, is divided into four parts with papers that Levitt has selected to take the reader through the environmental history of the United States and how development of networks, including the Internet, affected land use and abuse in the USA.

Part one looks at the effect that the new rail and telegraph network in the 19th Century had on the demographics of continental USA and how these led to massive environment degradation. I enjoyed Levitt's paper "Networks and Nature in the

American Experience" as it gave the reader a good look at the impact of the rail and telegraph network development in the United States and hinted at the possible replication of these mistakes in the near future.

The second part then discusses the effects that the Internet had on America during the 1990s and how this is a repeat of mistakes already made by earlier networks. This is made painfully obvious in the Hansen and Rotella paper "Rural Development and Biodiversity: A case study of greater Yellowstone" where the effect that the urbanization of rural areas close to National Parks and Nature Reserves, with the aid of a decentralized workforce, has on fauna is discussed and the reader can see how easily the mistakes of past generations can be repeated.

The third selection of papers looks at how conservation groups use the power of this new communications network to aid their own quests to conserve and protect by spreading their message and gathering information. An exceptionally good example of this is the Fitzpatrick and Gill paper "BirdSource: using birds, citizen science, and the internet as tools for global monitoring" which looks at how the global spread of computer technology and the Internet has allowed members of the global community to contribute to scientific research and how scientists can use this technology to increase sample sizes almost a hundred fold. As a budding scientist, this really got the blood pumping as it

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provided real insight into the potential of the Internet for fostering research.

The last collection of papers looks to the future and how the Internet is helping society to change its views and therefore change government policies to better protect the World's shrinking natural resources. This is illustrated well in the Durand and McGregor paper "The Watershed Approach, Biodiversity, and Community Preservation: bold initiatives in conservation in Massachusetts" and shows how the spread of knowledge about conservation issues to people can affect government policy; I think this brings a little hope to all of us that anyone can make a difference.

My one criticism is that this book does focus solely on the USA, and as such loses some relevance from the view point of an international reader, although it gives its message a solid base and a sound backing for comparison to conservation efforts throughout the world.

In closing I would recommend this book for professionals seeking an understanding of the problems and merits of the Internet and how it might affect them and their careers, and as recommended reading of a small selection of papers for tertiary students in any science or humanities based course.