



**West African Ornithological Society
Société d'Ornithologie de l'Ouest
Africain**



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Car ce guide est très complet et très soigné. Les différents milieux (fleuve, savanes et forêt) sont décrits rapidement, mais avec indication précise des lieux les plus intéressants. Les noms des espèces sont donnés en latin, en français et en anglais, avec mention du nom utilisé par Serle & Morel (1977, *A Field Guide to the Birds of West Africa*, Collins, London, ou 1979, *Les Oiseaux de l'Ouest Africain*, Delachaux & Niestlé, Neuchâtel-Paris) quand celui-ci diffère de la nomenclature maintenant adoptée.

Le souci de l'identification des oiseaux sur le terrain a dominé la conception de ce livre. La description de l'oiseau par P. Christy s'accompagne toujours de remarques sur son comportement à terre ou au vol, des lieux et conditions dans lesquels on peut l'observer. Un soin tout particulier a porté sur les émissions sonores et, grande originalité de ce guide, les illustrations en couleur de la plupart des espèces dues à W. Clarke résultent de croquis effectués sur le terrain si bien que l'attitude de l'oiseau a été privilégiée par rapport au détail des couleurs. Quand c'est nécessaire, plusieurs dessins sont consacrés à une seule espèce et quand deux espèces sont difficiles à séparer sur le terrain, elles figurent sur la même planche avec tous les détails pouvant faciliter l'identification. On peut regretter car il faut bien trouver quelque chose à critiquer que la réserve de la Lopé n'ait pas été mieux située géographiquement et que l'avifaune n'ait pas été succinctement analysée (nombre d'espèces etc.).

En conclusion, c'est un livre remarquable et l'on ne peut que féliciter les auteurs et les organismes qui en ont subventionné la réalisation.

Marie-Yvonne Morel

Coastal Assessment of Parc National du Banc d'Arguin, Mauritania. By A.R.G. Price, A.J. de Grissac & R.F.G. Ormond, 1992. Pp. x + 42. IUCN, Gland. ISBN 2-8317-0106-6, paperback.

This report presents a research plan, including some specific project proposals, for the Banc d'Arguin National Park.

The importance of the park is briefly described; its biological riches, a result of upwelling, include the world's largest concentration of wintering waders (> 2,000,000) and nest sites for 25000-40000 seabirds. Previous research, mostly on birds and littoral ecology, is reviewed and a preliminary bibliography presented, containing over 40 references.

The research plan advocates a multidisciplinary approach, with modelling of the system to permit prediction of the consequences of management options. The strategic plan is superficial, specifying only four "levels" of research: (1) specific, e.g. birds, (2) ecosystem, e.g. interactions between fish and birds (the authors do not seem to understand the term "ecosystem" – birds are termed an ecosystem!), (3) interactions between resources and humans and (4) interactions between

natural processes, "ecosystems" and humans, using predictive modelling. The five-year timescale attached to the envisaged progression from level 1 to 4 is unrealistic; the levels would have to be to some extent concurrent and the later stages which would depend on the results of earlier ones could not possibly be expected to happen within five years. Indeed, the five year programme, scheduled to finish in 1995, has hardly begun.

In contrast to the unrealistic and vague generalities of strategy, the specific research projects proposed are generally sound, although there are not enough of them to meet the overall purpose of enabling predictive modelling and management planning, and the methodology is not thought out in great detail; one important aspect inadequately covered by the proposal dealing with it is the extent of human use of the park's resources.

The report includes no more development jargon and verbiage than is usual in similar IUCN reports; but it is irritating that consultants feel bound to write such rubbish in an attempt to increase the apparent erudition of their work. One does not know the resources available to the authors, especially time allocated to the job, but I would have expected a proper research plan to be far more comprehensive; this report is so superficial and neglects so many subject areas that it fulfils its stated aim in only a sketchy fashion.

Alan Tye

A Birdwatchers' Guide to The Gambia. By Rod Ward, 1994. Pp. 116, line drawings and maps. Prion, Perry. ISBN 187-1104-041. Paperback £9.75 from Natural History Book Service, Wills Rd., Totnes TQ9 5XN, U.K.

This is an addition to Prion's series of birdwatchers' guides, others covering Nepal, Morocco, Southern Spain & Gibraltar, and Seychelles. The aim of the series is to help the birdwatcher make the most of a short visit, giving first an introduction to the country and general information for the tourist, followed by detailed site information for the birdwatcher.

With a list of over 500 bird species in a country of only 10,000 km², which is easy to travel to and within, the package tours available in The Gambia have made it a popular destination for birdwatchers. Dr Ward directs the reader to 19 selected areas of special interest, 17 of them within easy reach of the main resorts on the coast and two up-river, Tendaba and Basse, with an additional note on birding on the river itself.

There is a selective list of the rarer bird species which have been "reliably" recorded, with site information about each, and a full species tick-list for the country, although it is not made clear from what authority these lists are derived. Checklists of butterflies, amphibians, reptiles and larger mammals, and a selective bibliography, are also included. As detailed accounts of the region and its birds are