



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



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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

outside the scope of the *Birdwatchers' Guides*, travellers who like to have more than a superficial knowledge of the zoogeography of the countries which they visit might have preferred a fuller bibliography.

The tourist information is given in considerable detail, some inevitably already (1995) out of date, but the introduction to the country and its river is somewhat brief. The description of the River Gambia is also short and unfortunately inaccurate. In fact, the river is tidal for all of its 475 km within The Gambia; the limit of its tidal reaches at the Barrakunda Falls marks the eastern boundary of the country. The mangrove swamps of the mud flats and bolons of the lower reaches occur because of the salinity, not the tidal nature, of the Lower River.

Each site description has a sketch map, and Rob Hume's delightful line drawings, which accompany the text, give an indication of the type of habitat and of special birds to be found there. A second edition would perhaps benefit from the addition of a simple illustrated guide to the trees which are often used as markers in the site directions, and which may be unfamiliar to the visitor. Apart from the rather poor map of the whole country, the book is nicely produced and, on the whole, will serve its purpose well.

Amberley Moore

Weißstorchzug. Ökologie, Gefährdung und Schutz des Weißstorchs in Afrika und Nahost. By Holger Schultz, 1988. Pp. 460, many monochrome photos and maps. Josef Margraf, Weikersheim. ISBN 3-8236-1141-0, paperback.

This is the report, entirely in German, of an investigation by WWF-Germany and ICBP into the threats to the White Stork *Ciconia ciconia* on its migration routes and in winter quarters in the Middle East and Africa. The species in Europe is comparatively well-known; this study was initiated with the aim of gathering data to enable the preparation of a protection and management plan for the non-breeding areas. The study is based partly on a review of literature but mainly on the results of a questionnaire circulated to correspondents in each country, and by three field trips by the author, to Sudan, southern Africa and the Middle East.

The book comprises two sections, "general" and "specific", the latter consisting of a country by country presentation. The general section gives a synopsis of migration routes, breeding and wintering areas, habitat selection and threats. The biggest threat is hunting, throughout the migration and winter range, other important ones are poisoning, often from pesticides used for the control of locusts, army worms etc., and habitat change, especially by desertification and human activities. There is also a section considering whether ringing might interact with the stork's habit of thermoregulation by defaecating on its legs, to cause leg injury and death, and the conclusion is that it can, especially in hot climates.

For West African states, the country accounts vary between two and 13 (Mali) pages, countries where storks are rare being dealt with briefly. Some countries are