



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



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Book Reviews — Revues de Livres

Forest Protection in Ghana. By W.D. Hawthorne & M. Abu-Jam, 1995. Pp. xvii + 202, maps and photos. IUCN, Gland. ISBN 2-8317-0261-5, paperback, £14.

This latest in the IUCN Forest Conservation Programme series presents the results of ODA/NRI studies in association with the Ghana Forest Dept. It is a printed companion to a database and map display program (FROGGIE) that includes all of the botanical and protected area information presented in the appendices which take up about two-thirds of the book. Unlike the book, the intention is to keep FROGGIE continually up-dated; FROGGIE is obtainable from the first author at OFI, Oxford OX1 3RB, UK.

In Ghana, as in so many African states, the colonial forest reserve network has been subject to encroachment and to forestry mismanagement, to the extent of major logging concessions having been granted in a national park. The authors concentrate on cataloguing what's left and recommending how better to manage the trees. Other organisms are not directly addressed, although the management proposals outlined would benefit the other forest denizens: many would reduce physical destruction of forest and would maintain tree species diversity, especially by the designation of strictly protected key areas and cores, and buffer zones for the exploitation of non-timber products only. Zoological research is required to supplement the present surveys, although the authors do not seem to be aware of such work which has already been done in some of their study sites, including that of Dutson & Branscombe (1990, *Rainforest Birds in SW Ghana*, ICBP, Cambridge).

The authors are refreshingly outspoken in their criticisms of both bad forestry and bad conservation philosophy. They point the finger of blame for the poor state of many forests at badly-managed logging and at subsistence farming (which is no longer shifting and low-density). They are rightly critical of the starry-eyed notion that all forests can be handed back to local communities, for management as the latter see fit. Local values may result in the destruction of national or global resources, and "it is vital that protective regulations and needs are decided at least at the national level and enforced downwards . . . Local needs for conservation should be superimposed on the national requirements, not replace them" (p. 8). And: "The destruction of the 80% of the forest area outside the reserves is sometimes put forward as a manifestation of the failure of [“traditional”] forest conservation . . . yet . . . the survival of the 20% [in reserves] is rather a manifestation of its success" (p. 11). It is welcome to read such statements in an IUCN publication, since they contradict the misguided ideas of some ecologically and sociologically naïve members of IUCN's own staff, who believe that reserves should be abolished and all management decisions made at a local level. Although

there is a role for local involvement in decision-making, the unquestioning ideology that everything can be localized has resulted in the failure of IUCN-managed forest conservation projects. The authors also recognize that funding for protected areas in Ghana should come from the international community (we should all pay for conserving a global resource: biological diversity) and that much of the money should go to compensate local communities for their loss of freedom to use the forest.

Anybody interested in nature conservation in Ghana or in forest conservation and management anywhere, will find this book of value. I hope that it signifies a new realism within its sponsoring organisation.

Alan Tye

Gestion des Ressources Côtieres et Littorales du Sénégal. Ed. sous la direction de A.T. Diaw, 1993. 487 pp, plusieurs graphiques, cartes et photos. UICN, Gland. ISBN 2-8317-0145-7.

Les thèmes de l'atelier publié dans cet ouvrage sont essentiellement tournés vers les préoccupations du Centre de Recherches Océanographiques de Dakar-Thiaroye, dont la mission majeure est la gestion rationnelle des ressources halieutiques du Sénégal. Dans les recommandations, on a "souligné l'importance vitale du littoral pour l'économie . . . , regretté la multiplicité des agressions . . . subies par cet espace, déploré le manque de coordination entre les actions et les programmes de nombreux intervenants" et on a souhaité la création d'un Observatoire du Littoral qui définirait les solutions possibles d'une politique générale de la gestion de ces eaux littorales.

Le principal intérêt de l'ouvrage pour les ornithologues est de donner une vue d'ensemble des facteurs biologiques, environnementaux, sociologiques, historiques et économiques interagissant dans le système de production aquatique le long du littoral sénégalais (y compris la Guinée-Bissau). C'est là une mine de renseignements, jusqu'ici dispersés dans de multiples revues, qui sont rassemblés sous sept chapitres: problématique (4 articles dont un sur les peuplements anciens et un sur l'histoire de la colonisation); recherches géomatiques (7 articles); études et aménagements (7); pollution, urbanisation et santé (8); exploitation et gestion des ressources (8); espace touristique (3); conservation et gestion (6). Tous les articles sont en français avec un résumé anglais, tous sont inévitablement courts et certains sont dépourvus de toute bibliographie. Celle-ci, qui paraît dans l'ensemble bien faite, s'arrête à 1992; ainsi, la remise en eau de la cuvette du Ndiël, souhaitée par la Direction des Parcs Nationaux, est maintenant chose faite. On eût souhaité un glossaire pour les nombreux sigles ou noms locaux.

Les naturalistes seront en droit de s'étonner qu'un colloque consacré aux ressources côtières et littorales, financé (au moins en partie) et publié par l'UICN,