



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



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## Reviews — Revues

**Guide du Parc du W.** By C.M. Jameson & T.E.C. Crisler. No publication details given (1996, Peace Corps, Niamey). 130 pp., numerous line drawings. Paperback, available in English or French versions, from Peace Corps, BP 10537, Niamey, Niger, for FFr 50 + postage & packing.

W is the only national park in Niger, and is located in the extreme southwest, bordering other national parks in Benin and Burkina Faso. Together, these form the largest area of protected savanna in West Africa, protected in some form since 1926. W includes parts of the Soudan and Sahel zones, and contains some of the last viable populations of large savanna mammals in the region.

This book is not so much a guide to the park (although it does contain a trail map), as a guide to its biological contents, with most of it dedicated to species descriptions. Six common tree species are well described, as are the more common large mammals and a few rarer ones of special interest. An appendix gives a full mammal species list. A few reptiles are also described. Mammals take up some 40% of the book, of which only 4 pages are the species list. In contrast, birds occupy about 30%, of which 14 pages are species list (of > 350 spp.), and only 29 large, common, conspicuous species are described.

The species list cannot be used as an authoritative source, but is apparently intended simply as a checklist for visitors. Among the first 50 species in the list, seven are not mentioned for the park by Giraudoux *et al.* (1988, *Avifaune du Niger, état des connaissances en 1986. Malimbus* 10: 1–140), and no other sources are quoted. This limits the book to what its title suggests: a guide for visitors. In this, it seems to do its job well, and I hope that it might encourage knowledgeable visitors to publish their unusual observations from this comparatively poorly known area.

Alan Tye

**Birds of the African Rain Forests.** By S. Keith, no date (1997?). Two audio cassettes. Federation of Ontario Naturalists, Don Mills. Cat. No. SON5 809. Available from Holborne Distrib. Co., PO Box 309X, Mt Albert, Ontario L0G 1M0, Canada.

These two cassettes cover a wide range of African rainforest birds (and other animals in the background, usually identified in the accompanying notes), but all recordings were made in East Africa. Therefore, when using them as an identification aid in West Africa, one has to be aware of possible differences in vocalization within a