



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



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cultivation, plantation, roads, pesticides, shooting, trade) perhaps at the expense of a 5½ page table which could have been compressed. But his devastating conclusions may be allowed to speak for themselves: "less than 3% of the original forest area (remain as primary forest) ... 77 island or montane endemics are already vulnerable and will be endangered in the near future ... 13 species of lowland rainforest birds have now very small populations within restricted ranges ... the situation is very serious ... hunting must be drastically controlled ... conservation strategy has to focus on the preservation of the few remaining virgin patches".

C.H. Fry

THREATENED BIRDS OF AFRICA AND RELATED ISLANDS, The ICBP/IUCN Red Data Book, Part 1, 3rd ed. by N.J. Collar and S.N. Stuart with 12 colour plates by Norman Arlott, 1985, Int. Council for Bird Preservation, Cambridge, UK. Pp xxxiv + 761. £24.00. ISBN 2 88032 604 4. A scholarly, up-to-the-minute, invaluable compilation of biological facts pertaining to nearly 200 species (many of them Madagascan or insular and not strictly African). The text is terse and compressed, but easily readable and mercifully free of telegraphese, for each species with a brief summary followed by extended sections on Distribution, Population, Ecology, Threats, Conservation measures taken, Conservation measured proposed, Remarks, and References. A measure of the research which has gone into the preparation of this compendium is that many species each have in excess of 20 references, mainly to recent studies. If, in a hundred years' time, the handsome colour plates shall be the monument to what is, rather than to what was, this book shall have served its admirable purpose.

C.H. Fry

FIELD GUIDE TO THE BIRDS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA, by Ian Sinclair, 1984, Collins, London. Pp 361. £9.95. ISBN 0 00 219131 8. Photographs are a valuable aid to identification, although a field guide relying primarily of photos as this one does has distinct limitations. All illustrations are in colour, with one illustration per species; over 900 birds are shown, the large majority by good, clear photos well-printed with true colours. A few photos of scarce species are merely bad snaps, and some rare birds for which no photos are available are portrayed by paintings. Photos are arranged usually in sixes, on a plate opposite a page with thumb-nail southern-African distribution maps and a 5-10 line text for each species. The book composes a nice entrée for newcomers to Southern African, if not subsaharan, birds, and is also worth possessing by more experienced ornithologists since so many of the species are so rarely portrayed photographically.

C.H. Fry

SOUTH AFRICAN RED DATA BOOK - BIRDS, by R.K. Brooke, December 1984, South African National Scientific Programmes Report No. 97, csir, Pretoria. Pp vii + 213. No price given. ISBN 0 7988 3264 9. Paper, A4 format. Illustrated by point-plotted South African distribution maps only. About 1000 references.