

## REVIEWS

Jungles. Edited by Edward S. Ayensu. Crown Publishers, Inc., New York, 1980: 200 pp., 400+ color and black-and-white illustrations. \$35.00.

Perhaps no natural communities are so important, so awe-inspiring, so forbidding, and so endangered as are the jungles of the world. Professor Ayensu has drawn together a wonderful primer for understanding jungle ecosystems. When we refer to "jungle," we are usually speaking of tropical rain forest. About 1/12 of the earth's surface is covered by jungle, yet over half of the earth's plants and animals live there. Nowhere does bird diversity approach that found in the jungle. This volume carefully identifies the extent and character of the jungles of Latin America, Africa, Southeast Asia, and Australasia. It then dissects the plant diversity which creates jungle habitats, exposing the myriad of niches available to animal life. One chapter describes some of the "gee whiz" mammals, reptiles, and amphibians of jungles. Another looks at insects and other invertebrates. But birds rate a 28-page chapter of their own. Beautiful color illustrations reveal ecological parallels in jungles of different hemispheres: toucans and hummingbirds in the New World, hornbills and sunbirds in the Old. Eagles are top predators in all major jungle areas. Final chapters deal with "Jungle Partnerships," "Man and the Jungle," and the bounty of "Products of the Jungle." The products, such as timber, spices, fibers, oils, and medicines, have made our life the quality that it is. And we have only begun to identify the plants and animals that may serve man. Yet even before the extent of our natural treasure is known, plunderers are destroying it at an appalling rate. The loss of tropical rain forests is now estimated at 150,000 square kilometers per year.

This book is not an impassioned plea to "save the jungles." It is a fascinating factual account of the what, where, how, and why of jungles. In the end, however, the reader cannot help but feel an urgency to become involved, to help save the jungles. The future of human life may depend on it. I highly recommend this book to anyone - it is a must for libraries - large and small. -- J.A. Jackson

Ravens, Crows, Magpies, and Jays. By Tony Angell. University of Washington Press, Seattle, 1978: 112 pp., 84 black-and-white drawings. \$14.95 (hardcover)

This is a beautiful book about a fascinating group of birds. Tony Angell has exquisitely drawn crows, jays, magpies, and their relatives performing antics for which they are known. The drawings are accompanied by brief sketches of the natural history and folklore of each North American species, along with a few anecdotes concerning Old World species, glimpses from the author's personal experiences, and a good bibliography that will allow the reader to explore this group more thoroughly. This is a non-technical, very readable book. -- J.A. Jackson.

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The Japanese Crane, Bird of Happiness. By Dorothy Britton. Kodansha International/USA, New York. 1982: 64 pp., 75 color plates, 5 black-and-white plates. \$15.50 (hardbound)

This is a very attractive, popular book about a species that is similar to our own Whooping Crane. Britton discusses the role of the Japanese Crane in mythology and Japanese culture, its life history, and the problems it faces in coping with man's world. While the text is very informative and well-written, the book is well worth purchasing for the beautiful photographs by Tsuneo Hayashida. These depict the crane throughout the year, illustrate Japanese art using a crane motif, and even illustrate how to make a paper crane through the ancient art of Origami. -- J.A. Jackson.

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The Falcons of the World. By Tom J. Cade. Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 1982: 192 pp., 44 color plates, 30 maps. \$38.50 (hardcover)

Tom Cade is one of the world's foremost authorities on falcons, having been intimately involved with the restoration of the Peregrine Falcon to eastern North America as well as being associated with falcon research the world over. It is thus no surprise that this book thoroughly and accurately describes the habits, status, and current

research efforts related to the 25-40 species (depending on who categorizes them!). This book includes range maps, a good bibliography, chapters on classification, behavior, reproduction, migration, and the relationships between man and falcons. The 44 color plates by British artist R. David Digby (most a generous 9 X 12 inches) are all of "frameable" quality. If they are not already available for framing in a print series, I'm sure there will be a demand that they be made available. Each is of a perched bird (or birds) within a vignette of its natural habitat. Whether you are just interested in falcons - or just interested in fine bird art, this volume is a winner. -- J.A. Jackson.

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Endangered Birds of the World. The ICBP Bird Red Data Book.  
Compiled by Warren B. King. Smithsonian Institution Press,  
Washington, D.C., 1981. 624 pp. \$8.95 (paper), \$19.95 (cloth)

This is a compilation of basic information about all of the known endangered birds of the world. An introduction defines the various status categories used (e.g., endangered, rare, vulnerable...), lists the species included by family, and lists the 160+ species known or believed to have become extinct since 1600. Most of the volume is a compendium of information on troubled species. Each account includes a brief statement of status, distribution, population, habitat requirements, conservation measures taken, conservation measures proposed, and a bibliography of major works on the species. This is not a picture book. It is not a really readable book (although I found it fascinating to go through). This is a volume to aid governments, researchers, and conservationists. It is extremely informative and will be an invaluable tool. It should certainly be in any major library. -- J.A. Jackson.