

- there is a rigorous review process (see Lunney and Dawson 1994),
- there is intense editorial pressure to encourage scientist to express professional opinions about environmental issues — something that few are willing to do (see Fairweather (1994) for discussion),
- articles are edited to a high standard, emphasising clear English and succinct communication,
- A large A4/page format ensures clear reproduction of plates and detailed figures; many articles are illustrated — a trend that is sadly declining in contemporary, text-tight journals,
- balanced viewpoints from different professional practitioners are sought (e.g., articles on issues associated with environmental assessment are written by barristers as well as ecologists).

PROGNOSIS

The editor Dan Lunney and the council supporting members of the Royal Zoological Society of New South Wales are to be congratulated and encouraged for the production of a valuable journal that helps bridge the ever-increasing chasm between the interested public and the enthusiastic scientist. Like most Royal Societies, the emphasis is on rigorous communication of research findings to a broader and often lay audience. Increasingly, ecologists are shouldering their social responsibilities and applying their expertise more widely. The *Australian Zoologist* will continue to play a key role in this process and will continue to exploit the huge niche successfully and opportunistically in response to the rapid changes in the physical, scientific and social environments in Australia.

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Conservation of Australia's Forest Fauna

Edited by Daniel Lunney, 1991.
Royal Zoological Society of NSW, Mosman, NSW.
416 pp. ISBN 0 959995 15 3
RRP AUD\$65.00

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CONSERVATION of Australia's Forest Fauna should provide a jolt to both the thought police and the development whisperers. Lunney's editing has elegantly exposed the astounding lack of basic knowledge of our forest fauna and the consequences of poorly researched management decisions.

The book consists of a remarkable collection of papers of the type normally hidden away in journals rarely read by managers. The papers, solicited from working zoologists across the continent, presents critical conservation issues concerning Australian forests. The extraordinarily complex nature of holistic nature conservation is explored while elsewhere practical policy suggestions are offered.

According to the editor, the papers have been arranged with bold reviews and viewpoints being presented first followed by specific studies which give the basis for generalizations. These are then supported by a historical perspective and, finally, new methods, specific applications of ideas, geographical reviews and policy suggestions add further dimensions. The stated purpose is to keep the reader:

“alert to the possibility that a silent nocturnal creature could be sliding to oblivion for want of a few moments in the spotlight.”

The need for further survey and research is repeated mantra-like throughout the book which, unfortunately, will do little to guarantee its popularity with managers. The provocative tone commences with a critical review (Lunney, Chapter 1) of the resource Assessment Commission Forest and Timber Inquiry. It is stated that the draft report of the inquiry “makes little contribution on the subject of forest fauna . . .” and that “it succeeds in perpetuating misconceptions and muddying

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the waters of fauna conservation". It is sobering to reflect that few Australian forests have been exempt from logging and other disturbances since 1788. The pace of disturbance appears to be increasing as, contrary to prevailing wisdom, as much land was cleared in the 50 years as in the 150 years before 1945 (DEST 1995).

Properly managed logging need pose no threat to the long-term survival of forest wildlife. However, "properly managed" requires a far more sophisticated approach than generally employed by forest managers (Recher, Chapter 2).

I was intrigued by the possibilities of extending standard economic methodology of cost benefit analysis to the valuation of non-use forest values (Hamilton and Glyde, Chapter 4). Contingent evaluation is being increasingly used in the United States, but has yet to see wide applications in Australia. The technique has potential for environmental impact assessment of a wide range of projects including mining and this chapter significantly broadens the appeal of the book.

Just who constitutes the potential audience is problematic. My first thought was that Conservation of Australia's Forest Fauna should be made compulsory reading for every forester and forest policy decision maker in Australia. Leaving aside the Orwellian overtones, the sad fact is that social, (i.e., read economic) imperatives will still colour the reaction of land use

decision makers. Unfortunately, most readers will be the converted. A positive step would be to promote the book as a reference text to students of the natural sciences and resource management.

I was disappointed to note the lack of an Aboriginal dimension. The critique of conservation of archaeological sites in forests hardly suffices (Byrne, Chapter 33). A basic understanding of the impact of Aboriginal management and the interaction with wildlife of traditional lifestyles is essential to the establishment of conservation base lines. Perhaps this issue could be picked up in the next edition?

Indeed, I sincerely hope that there will be a second edition. This collection of papers has values as a benchmark, but the information will quickly become scientifically dated. Without wishing to alarm the poor editor, it would be useful if planning for a future update commenced now. In the meantime, the current edition is highly recommended as a resource text for students, research workers, resource management professionals and policy makers.

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People and Nature Conservation Perspectives on Private Land Use and Endangered Species Recovery

Edited by Andrew Bennett, Gary Backhouse, and Tim Clark.

Transactions of the Royal Zoological Society of NSW.

Surrey Beatty & Sons, Chipping Norton, NSW.

228 pp. 33 chapters. ISBN 0 646 24507 4

RRP Aud\$45.00

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OVERALL this is a very good book, although I must take umbrage with the title which does not represent the content of the book which is primarily about animals (wildlife) and not animals and plants (nature). This book, then, is about People and Wildlife Conservation.

Each of the 33 chapters represents a paper given during the annual meeting of the Australasian Wildlife Management Society (AWMS) held in Melbourne in 1993. The two symposia held at the conference were; "Implementing Endangered Species Recovery Programmes" and "Wildlife Conservation and Management on Private Land" and the chapters in the book are organized under Case Studies and Policy Initiatives in Endangered Species Recovery in Australia (Chapters 1-14) and Wildlife Conservation and Management on Private Land (Chapters 15-33). There is a slight Victorian bias in the content of the book which reflects that the symposia were held in Victoria.

In Chapter 1, Backhouse and Clark provide a good introduction to Case Studies and Policy Initiatives in endangered species recovery in Australia. The authors provide data on the number of extinct and threatened plants and animals in the Commonwealth followed by a breakdown of the plans available for various animal groups. Recovery Plans are underway in Australia for endangered plant species too, although the authors make no mention of these.

In Chapter 2, Yen and New provide an informative account of the present status of knowledge of conservation of non-marine invertebrates. Recovery plans involving such taxa are too few in Australia and the authors suggest that while single species approaches are likely to be useful in some situations, for the vast majority of invertebrates, consideration of species assemblages and habitats is likely to be a more effective conservation strategy. The authors highlight a major problem facing Australia, namely, that we are suffering from a lack of specialist knowledge of invertebrate taxonomy. This problem has led, in part, to recent attempts at rapid biodiversity-assessment of invertebrates (which, unfortunately, appears to be no more rapid than other methods of invertebrate biodiversity assessment). Yen and New highlight the poor public relations that invertebrates generally experience in Australia and they put forward some examples of how to interest the public in conservation programmes. It occurred to me

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