

While *Flight of the Huia* primarily fulfils the role of an annotated history of New Zealand ecology and conservation, Wilson also develops her personal views on the future of New Zealand conservation in her final chapter, "Seeking solutions". Her message that conservation will become even more challenging in the future is an unfortunate reality as it competes with ever-increasing resource use and a growing, increasingly affluent population. To progress beyond "the 'band aid' stage" Wilson believes that conservation must become a mainstream activity, as important to society as health or education, which is dependent on continued development of a conservation ethic. Her idea that we are merely "holding the fort" until technology advances to the point when cost-effective management allows significant conservation gain seems a solid and realistic, though not innovative, stance on the current plight of conservation in New Zealand.

Although Wilson uses terminology and detailed explanation that enable a non-specialist to easily follow her arguments, *Flight of the Huia* is accessible

to only the most committed of "armchair" ecologists due to her factual and detailed style which can be rather dry. Little gems of weaponry do occasionally pop out to equip the conservation-minded New Zealander with an argument against invasive species or continuing habitat modification: the Stephens Island Wren *Xenicus lyalli* was both discovered and exterminated in 1894, courtesy of a light-house keeper's cat! However, such tid-bits are deeply entrenched in the factual reality of a comprehensive ecological history, which is the major aim of this book. *Flight of the Huia* represents a highly accurate synthesis of old and new ecological research on New Zealand's vertebrate fauna, which will be an excellent source of reference for students and ecologists alike.

#### REFERENCE

- Worthy, T. H. and Holdaway, R. N., 2002. *The Lost World of the Moa: Prehistoric Life of New Zealand*. Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Indiana.

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## Achieving Sustainable Freshwater Systems: A Web of Connections

M. M. Holland, E. R. Blood and L. R. Shaffer (Eds.), 2003.  
Island Press, Washington.  
Pp. xiii and 351. ISBN 1 55963 929 6  
RRP A\$30.00 (ppr).

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THE question being asked around the globe is "how to satisfy the water demands of an ever-expanding human population while at the same time protecting the aquatic ecosystems and ecological services upon which all life depends" (p. 1). *Achieving Sustainable Freshwater Systems* addresses this question with the purpose of encouraging an integrated, cooperative and adaptive approach to sustaining wetlands and water resources.

The book is divided into four sections, 'Freshwater Systems from Past to Present' emphasizes the move away from regulations and towards a voluntary, integrative, adaptive, co-managed approach to controlling wetland degradation. 'Recent Scientific Perspectives' describes interesting insights in the field and the need for further research. 'Freshwater management' explains the practical process of restoration and 'Can we Achieve Sustainable Freshwater Systems in the Future?' describes the steps relating to the integration of economic,

political, social and environmental aspects to achieve appropriate management.

Information is delivered clearly and enhanced by the appropriate use of figures and tables. The evidence and references used to support statements throughout the book are generally relevant and recent. Interest may waver for some readers due to the limited scope and repetition of examples, particularly the Lower Mississippi Alluvial Valley. In my view, the lack of information describing our use and impacts on aquifers, and the limited acknowledgement of financial and human resources as an obstacle to achieving sustainable freshwater systems, especially in developing countries detracts from the book's value. However, the book succeeded in providing a broad introduction to the problems and potential solutions associated with the management of freshwater systems into the future.

*Achieving Sustainable Freshwater Systems* is different to other wetland books as it collates and evaluates all the existing information pertaining to the achievement of sustainable freshwater systems. I would recommend this book to anyone who is interested in learning how to better manage our limited water resources.

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