

REVIEWS AND ABSTRACTS

ALTENBURG, W. 1987. *Waterfowl in West African Coastal Wetlands: A Summary of Current Knowledge*. WIWO Report No. 15, Netherlands. 72pp.

This neatly produced WIWO volume documents, in inventory format, current knowledge of waterfowl in the western coastal wetlands of Africa. The geographical scope of the report extends from the northern boundary of Guinea-Bissau to the southern boundary of Cameroon (border with Rio Muni). The report is thoughtfully laid out allowing easy use for reference. The waterfowl considered are from a wide range of families (including waders), but exclude passerines and true sea-birds.

Ten countries are considered with introductory notes to each on physical geography and habitats. Within countries, individual coasts are detailed in sections, divided (where possible) along natural geographical boundaries. Each area is described with standard information on location (co-ordinates), areas of the major habitat types, protection status (where known), descriptions of major habitat types, importance to waterfowl (giving proportions of flyway populations where known), and finally any threats to the area. There are also maps of the whole coastline showing location and habitats within areas described. The structured layout of the inventory allows rapid and easy reference to information on particular coastlines.

The discussion reviews previous studies within the area and summarises the importance to waterfowl of habitats considered elsewhere in the inventory: mudflats, mangroves, marshes, lagoons, rice-fields and sandy beaches. Of particular interest is a table giving areas of each habitat type sub-divided by country. Each coastline account gives numerical estimates of waterfowl where available, although clearly the extent and quality of the data vary from accurate counts to guesses. The population data for five relatively large areas are summarised in an annex.

The final section of the report is a nine page bibliography of information sources, sub-divided by country.

Wibe Altenburg is to be congratulated for bringing together a large amount of information into a valuable report which documents the current knowledge of coastal waterfowl and their habitats in coastal west Africa. The report should be required reading for anyone with an interest in African coastal wetlands. Its slim size belies the amount of information contained and indeed, means that it could, and should, find a place in many rucksacks heading for Africa.

SHECKERMAN, H. & VAN WETTEN, J.C.J. 1987. *An ornithological winter survey of Lake Turkana, Kenya*. WIWO Report No. 17, Netherlands. 57pp.

This report, produced in conjunction with ICBP, documents a winter survey of Lake Turkana undertaken in January and February 1987. Although special emphasis was given to palearctic waders and ducks, all wintering waterbirds were counted on 165 km of the eastern side of the lake. On the basis of this 20% sample of the total shoreline, and with

knowledge of the distribution and abundance of shoreline habitats elsewhere, estimates of the total winter populations of waterfowl are made.

The report starts by considering the water chemistry, climate and biological production of the lake and then documents the range of habitat types present. Maps of the lake show the distribution of these habitats and their areas are also given.

The totals of birds on the 165 km census are tabulated, subdivided into seven sections. Whilst some 59 133 birds were counted within the sample area, it is estimated that 200 000 birds were present on the lake as a whole. The densities of species according to habitat type are also presented. The distribution and habitat selection of each waterbird species is presented in a detailed species list.

The discussion considers the stability of numbers of birds through the winter, the importance of Lake Turkana as a wintering area for palearctic birds, the conservation of the area and recommendations for future research.

DIJKSEN, L.J. & WOLF, P van der. 1987. *Mid-winter waterfowl census Turkey January 1987*. WIWO Report No. 18, Netherlands. 47pp.

This report, like WIWO Report No. 19 below, is a further valuable account of waterfowl census work in Greece and Turkey. The report describes the ninth midwinter waterfowl census in Turkey (January 1987) and at most sites contrasts are made with results from 1986. The numbers of all waterfowl are tabulated, and a detailed species section records sightings of all other birds seen during the census period.

LENSINK, R. 1987. *Notes on the birds of some wetlands in Northeast Greece and Turkey: the 6th of July - the 6th of August 1987*. WIWO Report No. 19, Netherlands. 35pp.

The report documents counts undertaken at 15 wetlands, with special emphasis being given to waterbirds. Descriptions of each of the sites counted include information on count methods and problems, human activities, site area, habitats, altitude, depth and a variety of other useful information. Each site also has a map showing survey routes undertaken to aid future census work.

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