

BOOK REVIEW

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Raptors at Risk. Edited by R.D. Chancellor and B.-U. Meyburg. 2000. Proceedings of the V World Conference on Birds of Prey and Owls. World Working Group on Birds of Prey and Owls, Berlin, Germany, and Hancock House Publishers, Blaine, WA. 895 pp., numerous figures and tables. ISBN 0-88839-478-0. Paper, \$50. The V World Conference on Birds of Prey and Owls was held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 4 to 11 August 1998. Organized by the World Working Group on Birds of Prey and Owls (WWGBP), the Raptor Conservation Group, and the Vulture Study Group of the South African Endangered Wildlife Trust, the conference was attended by more than 250 participants. Of the 130 oral presentations and 35 posters presented at the meeting, 88 were published in the proceedings.

The papers are organized into 13 sections: "Current Studies of African Raptors" (12 papers); "Biology & Conservation of the Vultures of the World" (nine); "Falcons in Asia and the Middle East" (eight); "Conservation Models for Raptors of the World" (11); "Raptors in Urban Environments" (six); "Understanding Distribution: the Whys and Wherefores of Geographical Ranges of Raptors" (three); "Predation and Feeding Ecology" (seven); "Conservation Biology of the World's Migratory Raptors" (five); "Islands and Raptors" (10); "Impact of Electricity Utility Structures on Raptors" (five); "Biology of Owls with Emphasis on Vocalisations" (five); "Taxonomy, Phylogeny, Developments in Raptor DNA Studies and Other Theoretical Aspects" (four); and "General Studies" (three). As with previous proceedings published by WWGBP, all of the papers are in English, and the covers are graced with beautiful color photographs

(Indian Vulture [*Gyps indicus indicus*] on front, Lesser Spotted Eagle [*Aquila pomarina*] on back).

Space limitations prevent an in-depth review of the proceedings, so I will highlight only a small number of papers. The section devoted to African raptors contains significant new information on Bat Hawks (*Macheiramphus alcinus*) based on time-lapse video recording at a nest in South Africa (T. Harris, A. Kemp, and J. Dunning) and on Henst's Goshawks (*Accipiter henstii*) gleaned from seven nests observed during three breeding seasons in Madagascar (Lily-Arison Rene de Roland). Also of note are the papers by Bill Clark and R.A.G. Davies on taxonomic problems in African falconiforms and by Michael Wink and Hedi Sauer-Gürth on molecular systematics. The section on vultures contains detailed status reviews of species in Africa (P.J. Mundy), Asia (S.M. Satheesan), and Latin America (Marsha Schlee) plus Lloyd Kiff's review of the status of cathartids in North America. Six papers are devoted to Saker Falcons (*Falco cherrug*) in Asia and the Middle East. Owls receive little attention in this volume. The paper on molecular systematics by Michael Wink and Petra Heidrich adds several species to the growing list of taxa whose phylogeny has been evaluated based on mitochondrial DNA. Wink and Heidrich estimate that New World *Otus* (screech-owls) have been separated from Old World *Otus* (scops-owls) for 6–8 million years and suggest that the two groups should be placed in different genera. They also advocate merging *Nyctea*, *Ketupa*, and *Scotopelia* with *Bubo*.

This volume continues the worthy series of proceedings on the world's raptors produced by Chancellor and Meyburg over the years and thus deserves a place in university libraries and in the personal collections of raptor biologists.—**Jeff Marks, Montana Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit, University of Montana, Missoula, MT 59812 U.S.A.**