

of biodiversity explicitly worth more than others (Chapter 6)? What role does ex situ conservation play in the field (Chapter 7)? Where to start with restoration ecology, indeed (Chapter 10)? Finally, Chapter 12 marks out clear examples of how conservation biologists can move their agenda, pointing to the impact the documentary movie *Blackfish* had on whale welfare, to the remarkable work by Merlin Tuttle that has turned bats living under a bridge in Austin, Texas, into city ambassadors, and admonishing students to get active on social media. Superficially, such agenda moving does sound like a good thing. But not only are animal welfare and insect control very different things, the important caveat that “conservation biologists must balance political advocacy with scientific credibility” (p. 402) really cannot be overstated.

Most of us gravitate to the latest edition of whatever is on offer, and there is no question that a lighter book is less daunting to students. Overall, I believe this new volume meets the “readability” criterion. On its own, some may find that the content is neither fish nor fowl nor good red herring. Interestingly, at a different level, this criticism might be leveled at the discipline as a whole. Our students need to develop many skills to help them manage a rapidly changing Earth (see, e.g., C. D. Thomas. 2017. *Inheritors of the Earth: How Nature Is Thriving in an Age of Extinction*. New York: Public Affairs); conservation biology teachers might do well to augment this textbook with an even more critical stance toward the overarching goals of the field in the context of the future that is already upon us.

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SCIENCE, CONSERVATION, AND NATIONAL PARKS.

Edited by Steven R. Beissinger, David D. Ackerly, Holly Doremus, and Gary E. Machlis. Chicago (Illinois): University of Chicago Press. \$130.00 (hardcover); \$45.00 (paper). xiv + 440 p.; ill.; index. ISBN: 978-0-226-42295-4 (hc); 978-0-226-42300-5 (pb); 978-0-226-42314-2 (eb). 2017.

AMERICAN TROPICS: THE CARIBBEAN ROOTS OF BIODIVERSITY SCIENCE. *Flows, Migrations, and Exchanges.*

By Megan Raby. Chapel Hill (North Carolina): University of North Carolina Press. \$90.00 (hardcover); \$29.95 (paper). xv + 319 p.; ill.; index. ISBN: 9781469635590 (hc); 9781469635606 (pb); 9781469635613 (eb). 2017.

Besides creating a continuous source of awe, there are, arguably, two main reasons why the tropics receive increasing attention from scientists in all fields in biology. First, the tropics are a biological diversity hotspot, containing more than three-quarters of the

species in the entire world’s biota. Second, the Earth’s biodiversity is under serious threat by our rapidly changing planet, with the tropics taking the biggest hit. However, through the eyes of scientific historian Megan Raby, there is, at least, a third reason why the tropics deserve special attention, namely: the neglected tropical roots of biodiversity research.

In *American Tropics*, the author elaborates on the expansion of the United States Empire at the turn of the 20th century, and how it facilitated U.S. biologists to establish long-term, place-based field practices in the circum-Caribbean tropics. She explains how, from these permanent research settlements, a newly founded society of American tropical ecologists emerged who proved to be fundamental in the rise of the scientific concept of biodiversity and, by extension, the origins of modern conservation biology. Emphasizing the importance of tropical fieldwork, *American Tropics* introduces readers to the most significant and influential U.S. field stations in the history of tropical research, all the way from Harvard’s Soledad Station in Cuba to Cinchona Botanical Station in Jamaica to Panama’s Barro Colorado Island. While doing so Raby affords key biologists, such as Thomas Barbour, William Beebe, Theodosius Dobzhansky, David Fairchild, and Edward O. Wilson the deserved amount of attention.

Building on a mass of archival information, the author disentangles the political, economical, and social actors that shaped tropical biodiversity research with a surgical-like precision. In the process, she leaves no stone unturned—not even the dirty ones. As the slightly provocative book title already indicates, Raby makes no effort to hide the strong colonial undertone of the history of U.S. tropical research. She critically reflects on whether or not U.S. biologists were merely following the American flag. At the same time, the author ably describes the racial- and gender-related calamities that came hand-in-hand with the establishment of the first tropical field stations in the early 1900s. Examples on how women scientists were denied overnight stays at field stations to avoid “any hint of tropical sexuality” and “the breath of a scandal” (p. 111), or how the white and rich “maintained the color line” (p. 114), provides a nuanced and honest portrayal of the history of U.S. tropical research.

With *American Tropics* as the first in-depth analysis of the history of U.S. tropical research, Raby, surprisingly, misses the opportunity to discuss the future of biodiversity research in the tropics. However, in the concluding remarks, the author eloquently states that the “future of research in the tropics demands a full recognition of its history” (p. 218), but, alas, without any concrete projections. Notwithstanding, *American Tropics* remains a sophisticated and comprehensive study on how the idea of biodiversity emerged

from place-based field practices, and is recommended for all tropical ecologists in both the present and future.

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BIODIVERSITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION IN TROPICAL ISLANDS.

Edited by Chandrakasan Sivaperuman, Ayyam Velmurugan, Awnindra Kumar Singh, and Iyyappan Jaisankar. Academic Press. Amsterdam (The Netherlands) and New York: Elsevier. \$127.50 (paper). xiv + 791 p.; ill.; index. ISBN: 978-0-12-813064-3. 2018.

Tropical islands originate either through volcanic activity or sea level rise that separates connected land masses. Colonizing species are isolated and rapid speciation leads to high island endemism, but makes these species also highly susceptible to anthropogenic pressures such as climate change. The recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 2018 report highlighted the risk for sensitive island ecosystems from coastal floodings and sea level rise even under a warming scenario of 1.5 degree Celsius. Considering the limited adaptation potential of tropical islands, biodiversity conservation is critical, because natural coastal ecosystems play a key role in mitigating the effects of sea level rise. Moreover, efficient strategies are needed to support island species to avoid increasing temperatures because possibilities of inland migration and shifting toward cooler and higher altitudes are limited. Thus, a book that promises a summary of the current knowledge about tropical islands, their biodiversity, and climate change adaptation is very timely.

With over 800 pages, the book draws heavily on the work of the editors on the Indian Ocean islands and to a lesser extent on the Pacific and Caribbean Islands. In the first of five sections, the volume starts out with two chapters on the general characteristics and the role of endemism of tropical island systems. In the second section, 10 papers on the Biodiversity of Tropical Islands cover terrestrial and marine biodiversity, and niche topics such as coconut diversity and rice genetic resources on tropical islands. The third section dedicates six chapters to the impact of climate change on livelihoods, marine biodiversity, and agricultural pest and diseases on tropical islands. In the next section, adaptive management is addressed in six chapters on biodiversity conservation with a strong focus on agricultural topics such as diversification and production technologies. The final section on policy decisions and biodiversity conservation covers, for instance, coastal area management, marine biodiversity, and agro-meteorological advisory services in India.

In the preface, the editors state that “this book covers a huge range of biodiversity documentation, conservation measures, strategies which are useful to several stakeholders that can be applied to various sectors, from forests to agriculture” (p. xiv). The volume does provide very interesting island-specific information, but cannot deliver on a comprehensive and state-of-the-art overview, which is informative to a broad audience. The chapters earlier in the book are generally informative and well done but, in particular, chapters on agricultural topics often fail to make sufficient links to tropical islands. In addition, none of the chapters have up-to-date literature and, finally, the link between biodiversity and climate change is introduced repeatedly. Instead of aiming to cover tropical islands, biodiversity, climate change, adaptation, agriculture, and the intersection of all, this book would have benefitted from a clearer focus on *Biodiversity and Climate Change Adaptation in Tropical Islands*.

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CONSERVING AFRICA'S MEGA-DIVERSITY IN THE ANTHROPOCENE: THE HLUHLUWE-IMFOLOZI PARK STORY. *Ecology, Biodiversity and Conservation.*

Edited by Joris P. G. M. Cromsigt, Sally Archibald, and Norman Owen-Smith. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press. \$89.99. xxxvii + 406 p. + 8 pl.; ill.; index. ISBN: 978-1-107-03176-0. 2017.

WILDNESS: RELATIONS OF PEOPLE AND PLACE.

Edited by Gavin Van Horn and John Hausdoerffer. Chicago (Illinois): University of Chicago Press. \$90.00 (hardcover); \$30.00 (paper). xi + 282 p.; ill.; index. ISBN: 978-0-226-44466-6 (hc); 978-0-226-44483-3 (pb); 978-0-226-44497-0 (eb). [Published in collaboration with the Center for Humans and Nature.] 2017.

WILDLIFE POLITICS.

By Bruce Rocheleau. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press. \$64.99. ix + 375 p.; index. ISBN: 978-1-107-18730-6. 2017.

This is an incredibly well-researched overview and survey of the factors, issues, and considerations that are relevant to conservation of biological diversity in the United States and around the world. This book would be an excellent reference and starting point for students, policy practitioners, and wildlife managers who want to gain a greater appreciation for the complexities of wildlife politics.