Threatened Birds of the Americas (the ICBP/IUCN Red Data Book)

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Abstract


Price approx. $75.00 U.S.

For anyone with an interest in conservation and/or the field status of the endangered birds of the Americas, this book is a must. Work on the book, which began in 1985, had to be halted in 1988 due to a lack of funding but was resumed after the 500th anniversary of Columbus's voyage of discovery produced some funds from the Spanish government. While seven authors are listed, the "tome" is actually the result of contributions of several hundred individuals. The book replaces the 1976 publication by W.B. King, "Red data book, 2 Aves," and its subsequent 1981 reprint under the title "Endangered birds of the world; the ICBP bird red data book."

While King was able to list the endangered birds of the world, the current revision requires four parts to complete the task. Part one dealt with "Threatened birds of Africa and related islands" (Collar and Stuart 1985) and was followed by the current part two dealing with the Americas. The final parts three and four will deal with birds of Europe and Asia, Australasia and the Pacific.

Throughout its 1,150 pages, species after species is profiled as to its distribution, population, and threats. Finally, each profile is concluded with those conservation measures that have been taken as well as those proposed. There are 38 psittacidae listed as threatened and an additional 17 listed in the appendix titled near threatened.

The majority of the birds listed, however, are small insect, nectar or fruit eating birds. While many are colorful, they are generally poorly represented in captivity. Due to our lack of experience with these "softbilled" birds, the possibility that aviculture will play a major role in their survival seems remote. To compound the misfortune, they seem to be a very following of individuals and/or organizations dedicated to the survival of these frequently termed "dicky birds." While habitat protection certainly will grasp many from the hands of extinction, some focused species-specific actions are needed. All aviculturists and pet owners with an interest in conservation should have one or more of the volumes of this important text.

Most regional Red Data Books (comprehensive list in Burton 1984) deal not only (and in some cases not even) with species or subspecies that are globally threatened with extinction, but with those that are threatened within the region concerned although perfectly safe elsewhere. Collar, N. J. (1986): Threatened raptors of the Americas: Work in progress from the ICBP/IUCN Red Data Book. Birds of Prey Bull. No. 3 Collar, N. J. & S. N. Stuart (1985): Threatened Birds of Africa and Related Islands. Cambridge: ICBP & IUCN. Diamond, J. M. 481-483. Wonderful reference book with a lot of thorough information. Great for anyone interested in birds. Wasn't expecting many pictures, but there are fewer than expected. Great IUCN red list book! Read more. Go to Amazon.com to see all 1 reviews 5.0 out of 5 stars.