

## Whose Bird?

By Bo Boelens and M. Watkins. 2004. Yale University Press, P.O. Box 209040, New Haven, Connecticut 06520-9040 USA. x + 400 pages U.S.\$35 paper.

Have you ever been curious as to who was the Bonaparte of Bonaparte's Gull fame? Was it really the feared Corsican tyrant? Now you can get a book that will answer that question and many more. The authors have researched about 1400 people who have, at one time or another, given their names to bird species. There is a cameo biography for each individual. As the book gives the accepted English names, there is a very slight bias to the coverage. European and American naturalists dominate the list, but to be fair Professor Ijima (Ijima's Warbler, *Phylloscopus ijimai*) gets his credit. Montezuma does not fare as well. He gets a single sentence biography stating he was Emperor of the Aztecs. Actually, Montezuma I, Emperor of Mexico, was a remarkable man. He was a victorious general before he succeeded his uncle as emperor in 1436. He is only recognized for his Quail, with no mention of his strikingly handsome Oropendola. In contrast, Californian Alberto Treganza's – now Great Blue – Heron gets almost a whole page.

Many of the names have fallen by the wayside. The Bancroft's Night Heron is now called by the more descriptive name of Yellow-crowned Night Heron. The loss of some names is a benefit. I would have trouble spelling and pronouncing Sjöstedt (Sjöstedt's Owllet, now Barred Owllet). No disrespect to Mr. Helmut Sick (Sick's Manakin), but I think the Golden-crowned Manikin would prefer its new name. However, I am sad to see Lear's Macaw is now an Indigo Macaw. Edward Lear, mostly known for his nonsense poems, was a remarkable Victorian bird artist who deserves a memorial. William MacGillivray's name lives on as

MacGillivray's Warbler (*Oporornis tolmia*) but his son's bird, MacGillivray's Petrel, is now the Fiji Petrel, but scientifically is *Pseudobulwaria macgillivrayi* (The generic name honours the Reverend James Bulwer.).

Some of these names are still current. Thekla Lark, named after the dying daughter of a German naturalist is still a Thekla Lark. Of the 17 species named for the pioneering Dutch ornithologist Coenraad Temmink, six still remain. I am delighted that the Adélie Penguin's name remains intact as it really suits this charming bird. Be thankful that Admiral Jules-Sebastien-César Dumont D'Urville named it for his wife and not himself.

There are some odd stories in the book. I was particularly titivated by the tale of Colonel George Montagu (Montagu's Harrier) who was cashiered from the British army for "provocative marital skirmishing" and thereby took up the study of science. I will never look at the harrier the same way again!

There are some names that are conspicuously absent. Roger Tory Peterson, Peter Scott (Scott's Oriole is named for Winfield Scott) and James Fisher were probably born too late in history. Linneus or Linné, who invented the nomenclature system, was alive in the right era, but remains un-honoured.

As well as the cameos, the authors have collected together those people who shared a characteristic in common, such as diplomats, Germans or those who died of gunshot. Many of the entries have a black-and-white portrait of the person featured. For those of you who love trivia or are keen naturalists preferably both, this is a fun book.

ROY JOHN

2193 Emard Crescent, Beacon Hill North, Ottawa, Ontario K1J 6K5 Canada

## Forest Dynamics and Disturbance Regimes: Studies from Temperate Evergreen-Deciduous Forests

By Lee E. Frelich. 2002. Cambridge University Press, 40 West 20th Street, New York, New York 10011-4221 USA. 266 pages. GBP50 (U.S.\$80).

Disturbance is ubiquitous in forest ecosystems. Forested landscapes are best viewed as an integration of climatic, biotic, edaphic and geomorphic processes that determine the character of disturbance events occurring over a wide range of temporal and spatial scales. Disturbed by the extremes of either catastrophic, stand-replacing events that may include fire, insect outbreak, and extensive windthrow, or periodic, small-scale gap processes mediated by fungal pathogens, forests are in constant flux when viewed from a landscape perspective. Such a wide range in the periodicity, intensity and scale of disturbance events, and the diversity of bio-edaphic interactions create a complex, fluid, heterogeneous landscape.

Lee Frelich, founder and director of the University of Minnesota Center for Hardwood Ecology, introduces the reader to the significant disturbances that have shaped, and continue to shape, the hemlock-hardwood forests of the northern regions of the Lake States (Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan). For the past two decades Dr. Frelich has dedicated himself to understanding the stand- and forest-level dynamics of these deciduous-to-boreal transition forests. He forms part of a long tradition of university and government (United States Forest Service) forest ecology research, much of which is scattered in scientific journals and government reports. *Forest Dynamics and Disturbance Regimes* provides for the first time, in an engaging, well-illustrated, and synthetic format, the fruit of this rich research legacy.

“Under what conditions do forests change or stay the same?” Thus might one summarize the intent of this book. Introductory chapters set the scene by describing the Great Lakes temperate forests and their disturbance regimes dominated by fire, wind, insect outbreaks and mammalian herbivory. Of significance to the practicing forest ecologist will be the chapter on sampling and interpretative techniques used to detect and interpret forest disturbance regimes. Emphasis is placed on the use of tree radial increment patterns as a valuable source of insight into stand disturbance history.

Frelich emphasizes the critical role played by disturbance in both stand development and forest succession. He properly distinguishes between stand development and succession, both of which are often confused in the literature. Disturbance will always initiate a new cycle of stand development in the regenerating, post-disturbance forest. However, disturbance may or may not initiate a species change or a new successional sequence.

Consideration is also given to the differing effects of disturbance at both the stand- and landscape-level. This distinction is important, especially given the wide temporal and spatial scales at which disturbances may occur. Furthermore, instability at the stand level may be interpreted as stability at the landscape level. Interpretation often depends on the scale of investigation.

A particular strength of this work is Frelich’s ability to engage the complex interaction of different disturbances. Frelich not only introduces the wide diversity of temporal and spatial patterns of forest change, but even more importantly, highlights often counter-intuitive insights into forest change and continuity. I found the following particularly noteworthy: (1) the nonlinear response of forest species composition to disturbance severity, (2) the cause and development of patchy hardwood-software mosaics, (3) clarifying taxonomy of the concept of old-growth, (4) how different forest types

can exist on relatively homogeneous sites, and (5) the multiple successional pathways open to any particular forest type. Frelich’s final chapter summarizes the notion of forest stability. It provides conceptual models of forest response to disturbance, 3-D models of succession in different forest types, and a final classification of four different types of forest landscape.

This work is particularly important as humans continue to “disturb” forests, especially by commercial forestry. Before any claims can be made about the desirability of the changes created by human interventions, it is essential to properly comprehend the range of natural forest disturbance regimes and the associated changes in forest structure and tree species composition.

The book addresses the scientific community and would properly of greatest interest to forest ecologists and all students of forest change. The judicious mix of empirical case studies, hypothetical examples and conceptual models helps the reader to think “beyond the box.” The many line drawings, flow charts and black-and-white photographs help to clarify the different concepts.

As one is reminded in the subtitle, this book focuses exclusively on the temperate evergreen-deciduous forests (of the Lake States). While it is certain that many of the concepts developed from research in this forest type are applicable to other forest types, it is wise to resist any quick and easy transfer of ideas. Forests grow in conditions that span a wide ecological spectrum, a situation that often resists our human tendency to categorize and classify. Be that as it may, this book provides rich and substantive insight into this well-studied – and much-loved – forest region at the deciduous-boreal interface.

JOHN MCCARTHY, S.J.

St. Mark’s College, University of British Columbia, 5935 Iona Drive, Vancouver, British Columbia V6T 1J7 Canada

### **Snowshoes & Spotted Dick; Letters from a Wilderness Dweller**

By Chris Czajkowski. 2003. Harbour Publishing Co. Ltd., PO Box 219, Madeira Park, British Columbia V0N 2H0 Canada. 298 pages. Paper U.S.\$24.95

This book is a one-sided account of the wilderness experiences of a woman of extraordinary independence, as she writes letters to a friend named Nick. Chris Czajkowski is an author and wilderness guide who has chosen a life of relative and geographic isolation on remote property where she lives three quarters of the year in the coast mountains of British Columbia, 480 kilometres north of Vancouver. There is no telephone or mail delivery and the radio only works on clear days. The computer used while writing the book draws the electricity required to function from solar panels. The visitors to the eco-tourism business “Nuk Tessli Alpine Experience” are brought in by float

plane, along with any supplies and news from the outside world.

This, the fourth book by the same author, is her account of the incredible effort to build a third cabin on the property. Its format of letters scribed to a friend in Germany is generously interspersed with some textual description, a few black-and-white pictures and hand-drawn sketches.

The reader is drawn in by expressive language evoking in the imagination pictures of the breathtaking vistas, and natural surroundings so that you feel almost as though you have been there, perhaps as a visitor to “Nuk Tessli”. The added mystery of “what is Spotted Dick?” is a cute grab but is just a little overdone.

The easy flow of the language makes the 298 pages an easy read, despite the occasional construction jargon.