

emphasis is on Bar-tailed Godwits. Its 16 chapters are devoted to some of the basic biology and natural history of godwits, including foraging and food, migration, breeding ecology and conservation. It gives a great flavour of shorebird fieldwork whilst following the birds from their breeding haunts in Alaska through their migration stop-over sites in China, Korea and South East Asia, down to their wintering grounds in New Zealand and Australia. Unfortunately, there is bleak news in much of their range: these charismatic birds are facing the loss of much of their intertidal feeding habitats in the Yellow Sea, and their Arctic breeding sites are likely to be influenced by global climate changes. One item of good news: whilst this bird was once a favoured delicacy of Maoris and the European settlers, now the hunting pressure is easing, both in their wintering and stopover sites.

The book nicely illustrates two important points. First, to protect migratory birds a concerted approach is needed over vast geographical ranges. We live in the era of globalization when news, diseases, new products and technologies rapidly sweep through the whole planet. Shorebird conservationists are increasingly benefiting from the globalization and, through national authorities and NGOs in various countries, they strive to combat the threats to breeding, migratory and wintering birds. Progress is not that swift, largely owing to the different cultures, legislations and socio-economic situations in countries within the East Asian Flyway but, as Woodley illustrates, there are promising initiatives. Secondly, to protect shorebird species, research biologists, reserve managers, shorebird volunteers, NGOs and local communities must work together. Keith Woodley demonstrates and praises the interactions between the very different strata of human society that are linked together by the common desire to protect these birds.

Who should read this book? The most obvious readers are shorebird fans who are often prepared to make long-distance journeys themselves to research and conserve shorebirds in remote corners of the planet. In addition, ornithologists, birders and members of the general public will also benefit from reading through what is a well-structured, informative and inspirational work.

**Tamás Székely**

WORMWORTH, J. & ŞEKERCIOĞLU, Ç.H. **Winged Sentinels: Birds and Climate Change.** *x + 262 pages plus 41 colour plates on an additional 24 pages.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011. Paperback, £24.99, ISBN 978-0-521-12682-3. Website: <http://www.cambridge.org>.

This excellent global overview starts with a memorable quote from Marjory Stoneman Douglas (1947): 'The ability of the birds to show us the consequences of our

own actions is among their most important and least appreciated attributes...', which provides the framework around which the book is written. Wormworth and Şekercioğlu use birds to provide an early warning of the ecological impacts of climate change on our world, and the potential significance of future projected impacts. This is achieved in an engaging style, with many well-written examples. Each provides a short pen-sketch of a bird and its environment before discussing the impacts or potential impacts of climate change on that species. These have short titles like newspaper headlines, and in many cases a quotation. Whilst the titles may break the flow of the text for some, they do contribute to the accessibility of the book by providing markers for the reader to dip in and out. In fact, the book is really an anthology of these examples, which are woven together to form seven discrete chapters, each of which focuses on separate topics.

The first chapter looks at the effects of climate change on phenology, and how shifts in the seasonality of the environment are affecting birds. This then leads to a second chapter focused on migrants, which are particularly impacted by such phenological mismatch, as well as other pressures. The third chapter describes how climate change is leading to changes in the distribution of species and composition of communities which, of course, is caused by increases and decreases in the abundance of birds at individual locations, the focus of Chapter five. Chapters four and six examine particularly vulnerable systems and habitats: seabirds and the tropics, respectively. Some of the best-documented responses to temperature change are from the marine environment, and Wormworth and Şekercioğlu select a good range of these from around the globe to illustrate their widespread nature. Conversely, there is much less known about the tropics, where the majority of bird diversity is found. Importantly, the authors do not neglect this environment, but make good use of what studies do exist alongside projected future changes to argue that climate change will combine with other pressures to cause particular problems for tropical species. In the final chapter, the authors briefly consider the conservation solutions, recognizing the uncertainty and calling for an adaptive management approach. They conclude by emphasizing the need to restrict global warming to less than 2 °C if damage to many unique and threatened ecosystems is to be avoided.

Wormworth and Şekercioğlu have done an impressive job of collating the wealth of information that exists to provide a breathtaking overview of the topic from around the world, for which they should be congratulated. Importantly, they present this in a very readable form that is accessible to the non-specialist. This does, however, come at the cost of detail associated with each example, and an absence of critical synthesis which the more academic reader may feel is lacking, particularly as

many of the most severe examples presented are of projected future impacts and therefore associated with considerable uncertainty. The authors acknowledge in the Introduction that they have particularly focused on the species most likely to suffer negative effects of climate change. This is therefore not a complete scientific review of the subject, but a call to arms to consider the likely negative implications of climate change on birds, and therefore, on the environment. Given the urgent need to address greenhouse gas emissions to achieve the 2 °C target (Rogelj *et al.* (2011) *Nature Climate Change* 1: 413–418), this is an important message, and the book should be widely read as a result.

James Pearce-Higgins

#### Also received

ARTUKHIN [ARTYUKHIN], YU. B. & GERASIMOV, YU. N. (eds) **The Biology and Conservation of the Birds of Kamchatka. Volume 9.** (in Russian, with English Contents, abstracts and captions). 116 pages, black-and-white figures and tables. Moscow: BCC Press, 2010. Paperback, price not known, ISBN 978-5-93699-075-5. Website: <http://www.biodiversity.ru>.

Among the 10 longer articles in this latest volume on birds of the Kamchatka Region in Russia's Far East, single-species studies focus on Spotted Nutcracker *Nucifraga caryocatactes* distribution in the southern part of the Peninsula during the rich *Pinus pumila* conifer crop of the 2006–2007 season, and on the daily activity patterns, distribution and numbers of Spectacled Guillemot *Cephus carbo* in the South Kuril Islands. Another paper presents new distributional data for House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* and Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus* in the north of the Region. There are nine short communications.

M.G.W.

AVELA, E.-P. **Sinitiainen: Neljän Tuuman Hurrikaani [The Blue Tit: Four Inches of Hurricane]** (in Finnish). 90 pages, numerous colour illustrations, including photographs (many by Ari-Pekka Palmu). Pori: Satakunnan Kirjateollisuus Oy, 2011. Hardback, €34.00, ISBN 978-952-67119-5-9. Email contact (author): [esa-pekka.avela@pp.inet.fi](mailto:esa-pekka.avela@pp.inet.fi).

The Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus* is the symbol of Satakunta district around Pori on Finland's west coast. Entirely in Finnish (I am grateful to the author for providing a summary in English), Esa-Pekka Avela's book is aimed at a wide readership and comprises 29 short chapters, which include interviews with experts. There

are also text boxes with useful summaries for quick reference. Topics covered include plumage colour, dimensions, the nature of the bird ('Billy Biter'), food, voice, courtship and the relationship between the sexes, the breeding cycle, breeding success, predation, moult, autumn movements, flock behaviour, distribution, how to help the species, taxonomy, history from the last ice age, and Blue Tits in art and literature.

M.G.W.

ERTEL, R.C. **Birds in Africa. An Introduction and Survey to the Birdlife of Africa.** 415 pages, many colour photographs and maps. Nottuln: Fauna Verlag, 2011. Hardback, £39.99, ISBN 978-3-935980-16-6. Website: <http://www.faunaverlag.de>.

WITHERS, M. & HOSKING, D. **Wildlife of Southern Africa.** 272 pages, many colour photographs. London: HarperCollins Publishers, 2011. Softback, £16.99. ISBN 978-0-00-738307-8. Website: <http://www.harpercollins.co.uk>.

Here are two more photographic guides to African birds, the first covering the whole continent, the second dealing with the birds (and other wildlife) of Southern Africa. Photographs in both books are largely by the authors, with contributions acknowledged from other photographers (and in Ertel's book localities and dates are given for each, a useful feature). As in any guide of this kind, photograph quality varies from excellent to poor, the latter being true of some images in *Birds in Africa*, where there is a serious error, the claimed 'Lemon Dove *Columba larvata*' being a Blue-headed Wood Dove *Turtur brehmeri*. The accompanying written descriptions are often unhelpful, and at times erroneous. Ertel has included distribution maps, but they are extremely small and of use only to the most inexperienced and ill-prepared traveller. This book, a translated, supplemented and revised version by the author and Nik Borrow of Ertel's *Vögel in Afrika* (2009), cannot compete with the various excellent regional, non-photographic guides now available.

*Wildlife of Southern Africa* contains sections on mammals and reptiles, together with an introduction giving hints for photography from the two expert authors. It is in the series of Collins Traveller's Guides, and is excellent value, though there are many other good guides on the Southern African market. In particular, Sinclair & Ryan's *Complete Photographic Field Guide: Birds of Southern Africa* (Struik, 2009) does not restrict itself to the single photograph per species of these two books.

R.J.D.