



British Ecological Society

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Review

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Source: *Journal of Ecology*, Vol. 80, No. 1 (Mar., 1992), p. 184

Published by: [British Ecological Society](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2261078>

Accessed: 21-04-2015 03:27 UTC

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of other countries. The Vesey-Fitzgerald assertion that Evans sets out to test is in essence comparative, but Evans virtually restricts his attention to Britain. His criticisms of the conservation record of governments and statutory bodies are trenchant: the habitat protection provisions of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, for example, are described as 'an unworkable mess' and the Act itself as 'impotent'. One is left with little doubt that Evans regards Vesey-Fitzgerald's views as dangerously complacent. The final chapter is devoted to the future, ending with 'The Mission', a section in which he outlines the future task of the conservation movement.

Unfortunately, Evans' credibility is undermined by numerous inaccuracies and some contradictions. We are told, for example (p. xxiv), that in the 1970s the chequered skipper butterfly became extinct; by p. 115 the author admits that there is a 'remnant population hanging on in Scotland'; in fact, Collier (1986) reported 41 sites for the species in Scotland, which included a loch-side 18 km long. The life cycles of the blue butterflies are hopelessly muddled: features of the large blue are conflated with those of other species and applied to the group as a whole. However these are minor errors compared to the statement that over 1000 plant species have become extinct in Britain since 1950! Bald assertions, e.g. 'trees in Britain are more ravaged by air pollution than any others in Europe', are not supported by evidence. There are too few references, so that the (increasingly sceptical) reader is unable to follow up points which are interesting or doubtful. Do 19% of young Brazilians really volunteer for conservation work, compared to 5% of Britons?

In retrospect, the author's decision to combine a historical survey of nature conservation with an evaluation of its achievements and recommendations for future action must be judged over-ambitious. The result is unlikely to satisfy historians, ecologists or conservationists, although all will find thought-provoking material in its pages.

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### Reference

Collier, R. (1986) The conservation of the chequered skipper. *Focus on Nature Conservation*, 16. Nature Conservation Council, Peterborough.

A. Gomez-Pompa, T.C. Whitmore and M. Hadley (eds) (1991) *Rainforest Regeneration and Management. Man and the Biosphere*, Vol. 6. Pp. xxiii + 457. UNESCO, Paris and The Parthenon Publishing Group, Carnforth, Lancashire. ISBN 1-85070-261-6. £35.00 (hardback).

This volume was published as a result of a symposium held in Venezuela in 1986. It is divided into four

sections. The first is an introduction to the management of natural tropical forests (18 pp.), the second comprises seven 'topical' reviews (182 pp.), the third consists of 23 case studies (240 pp.) and the fourth is a conclusion (7 pp.). The authors are from a wide range of countries and the reviews cover a similarly wide range of topics and geographical locations, although the tendency is for articles to be based on work from Central and South America.

The 'topical' reviews range from discussions of the range of tolerance of tropical trees (Oldeman & van Dijk, and Whitmore), the physiology of pioneer and secondary species (Bazzaz), the reproductive biology and genetics of tropical trees (Bawa & Krugman), through to seed ecology (Janzen & Vázquez-Yanes) and nutrient cycling (Jordan). All of these are interesting but, on reflection, I would like to have seen an additional chapter on enrichment planting in primary and secondary forests. I know of several experiments in which logged-over forest in Venezuela and Brazil have been experimentally planted with seedlings of commercial species. There must be many other studies of this sort and the technique is potentially useful for managing forests. A review of such studies would be useful for forest managers and interesting to forest ecologists.

The last 'topical' review, by Schmidt, entitled 'Tropical rain forest management: a status report' is a continent-by-continent and, to some extent, country-by-country review, two countries in Asia and seven in South and Central America being dealt with specifically. The whole chapter is rather depressing in that it is largely an account of failures, most of which are a result of social and political problems. The section on case studies is interesting because it gives us leads into research being carried out by many people in various parts of the world. The chapters are very variable in subject matter some being reports of specific projects — e.g. a study of seed germination and ground flora in the Omo Forest Reserve in Nigeria by Okali and Onyeachusim — and others being more wide-ranging reviews — e.g. the report on the management of rain forests in Amazonian Brazil by Dubois.

Overall, this is a useful book for a wide audience interested in tropical forest management. Those who are already experts will find some of the case studies more interesting, those with less expertise in the area will find some of the 'topical' reviews more interesting. Let us hope that whoever reads whichever parts is encouraged to continue, or start, their own studies, because the management of tropical forest is a major challenge for everyone interested in tropical biology. However, we must remember that the understanding and control of the social and political limitations are far more important than the silvicultural or ecological constraints.

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