



## New Publications

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**Nicholas E. Newton-Fisher, Hugh Notman, James D. Paterson, Vernon Reynolds (eds): Primates of Western Uganda. Springer, 2006, xvi + 516 pp., \$119.00 (hardback)**

**Julian Caldecott, Lera Miles (eds): World Atlas of Great Apes and Their Conservation. University of California Press, UNEP-WCMC, 2005, 456 pp., \$45.00 (hardback)**

These 2 edited volumes are topically and thematically closer than their titles might imply, but whereas *World Atlas of Great Apes and Their Conservation* also delivers the implied thoroughness and conceptual unity, *Primates of Western Uganda* suffers from a lack of focus unfortunately too common among such disparate collections. The papers in *Primates of Western Uganda* originated in a 2001 Primate Society of Great Britain conference. The title prompts 2 questions: which primates, and which research sites? In the Preface, the editors note an “unfortunate” taxonomic bias towards chimpanzees in particular (12 chapters) and gorillas secondarily (4 chapters). Five chapters focus exclusively or mostly on monkeys, 1 presents results of Ambrose’s survey of prosimians at 14 sites (inexplicably not listed in a single table), and one covers taxonomy (Groves). As justification, the editors also note that most recent research in western Uganda has been on chimpanzees and gorillas and that the volume presents only new studies. However, the taxonomic bias also reflects the fact that 13 of the chapters are based on work in Budongo, including 3 (Pebsworth *et al.*, Emery Thompson *et al.*, and Emery Thompson and Wrangham) that compare the Sonso chimpanzee community there with the Kanyawara community in Kibale. Only a chapter (Chapman *et al.*) on the effects of logging on red colobus behavioral ecology deals with the various, then-new monkey studies in Kibale.

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The breadth and quality of individual contributions vary considerably. A few chapters on behavioral ecology deserve wide attention. Emery Thompson and Wrangham present a useful method for standardizing comparisons of gregariousness between males and females in fission-fusion species by controlling for variation in party size and community composition. Its application to data from Kanyawara and Sonso shows that males predictably are more gregarious than females at both sites, but peripheral females are more gregarious at Sonso than at Kanyawara, perhaps because of differences in food patch size and distribution and/or in rates and intensity of male aggression. Notman presents a valuable review of his own and others work on chimpanzee pant hoots and cogently argues for a shift away from a search for reference in chimpanzee vocalizations to a focus on their social functions. Plumptre informatively compares the diets of 2 guenon spp. (*Cercopithecus ascanius* and *C. mitis*), guerezas (*Colobus guereza*), and chimpanzees in Budongo and their responses to selective logging. Preece summarizes results of his research on guereza ecology and distribution in Budongo and highlights the nutritional importance of leaves from lianas and the influence that variation in the abundance of larger-diameter lianas has on local variation in guereza population density. He nicely places this work in a comparative context with other work on colobine nutritional ecology. However, some attempt to synthesize his work, Plumptre's, and that by Chapman *et al.* in Kibale would have been useful. Twinomugisha *et al.* provide valuable information on the feeding ecology of golden monkeys (*C. mitis kandti*) in the fruit-scarce environment of the Virungas.

Many chapters besides those on logging effects address conservation issues. Reynolds' brief summary of the situation for chimpanzee conservation in Budongo pales beside the deep treatment in his recent monograph (Reynolds 2005). Watkins' survey of how people around Budongo perceive chimpanzee and forest resources produced some unsurprising, if dismaying, results (e.g., most people do not think that chimpanzees are endangered or that the forest might disappear); others were less predictable (e.g., most people's attitudes towards chimpanzees were positive, though this may change as more farmers shift to sugar cane cash-cropping; *cf.* Reynolds 2005). One wonders how much more depth she might have obtained had she not needed to rely on translators. Two chapters on behavioral compensation by chimpanzees to snare injuries (Munn; Stokes and Byrne) provide great detail on positional behavior and food processing without clear big-picture significance.

Other chapters include a preliminary analysis of habitat use by Bwindi gorillas and chimpanzees (Nkurunungi and Stanford), 2 with results from short studies of feeding and seed predation by the camp baboon group at Sonso camp (Okecha and Newton-Fisher; Paterson), an overly-detailed description of Bwindi gorilla endoparasites (Rothman *et al.*), 1 on promiscuous mating by female chimpanzees (Hashimoto and Furuichi), 2 on chimpanzee behavioral endocrinology (preliminary work by Seraphin *et al.* on nutritional effects on male endocrinology; work by Emery Thompson *et al.* on female reproductive ecology), and contributions on gorilla nutrition (Rothman *et al.*), chimpanzee self-medication (Pebsworth *et al.*), chimpanzee leaf-sponge use in Budongo (Quiatt), and chimpanzee geophagy (Tweheyo *et al.*). Most contain useful information, e.g., on chimpanzee interbirth intervals at Sonso and Kanyawara (Emery Thompson *et al.*) and some contain considerable trivia, e.g., Tweheyo *et al.*. Few of these or other chapters are linked thematically or conceptually in substantive ways, and the extent to which the authors offer integrative and comparative perspectives vary

according to their personal motivation. For the most part, this leaves the volume as a whole unified only along the lines of the title topic. Consequently, most primatologists will use it selectively at most, especially given the \$119 price, and the more substantial chapters probably will not have the impact that they should. Better conceptual integration might have offered them a better fate.

In contrast, the editors of *World Atlas of Great Apes and Their Conservation* have excellently organized a vast amount of material around their obvious conceptual framework. The book falls into 3 general sections. The first includes a chapter on the “Evolution, dispersal, and discovery of the great apes” (Jenkins); a concise and informative chapter on the ecology of great ape habitats (Caldecott and Kapos); and overviews of the distribution, ecology, and behavior of chimpanzees, bonobos, gorillas, orangutans, and, in a cameo appearance, gibbons. Most of the overviews are collaboratively authored, and many authors have conducted field research on the relevant taxa, e.g., Martha Robbins and Elizabeth Williamson co-authored the eastern gorilla chapter with Sarah Ferris of UNEP. They introduce conservation issues and priorities, and they contain inserted boxes on topics like “Chimpanzees as predators”, “Seed dispersal by bonobos”, and “Adaptations of bearded pigs to life in dipterocarp forests”. The volume is not intended as a textbook for an introductory primate behavioral ecology course, but these chapters would fit well into the syllabus (particularly that on great ape habitats).

A middle section includes chapters on “Challenges to great ape survival” (Miles, Caldecott, and Nellemann), “Conservation measures in play” (Varty, Ferriss, Carroll, Caldecott), “Lessons learned and the path ahead” (Caldecott), and “Where are the great apes, and whose job is it to save them?” (Redmond). These provide somewhat overlapping coverage of the effects of logging, mining, commercial agriculture, disease, the bushmeat trade, and other threats to habitats and populations; ebola, palm oil, and coltan receive unfortunately well-deserved and topical attention. They also touch on many projects aimed at addressing these threats and list their sponsoring NGOs. Unsurprisingly for a book created in association with UNEP and the UN Great Ape Survival Project (GRASP), for which Redmond is the Chief Consultant, these programs, and the UN in particular, receive considerable praise. However, this is mixed with judicious criticism. For example, Varty and colleagues remind us that many conservationists wrongly assumed that people eat bushmeat simply to satisfy protein needs and that successfully establishing alternative sources of animal protein as part of ICDPs would curtail the trade and provide income to participants. Instead, they argue, we need a much broader approach that includes strong enforcement of hunting bans and strong campaigns to reduce demand, and we should treat bushmeat traffickers like any other criminal gang. Such exhortations may not entirely satisfy those who see effective protection of nominally protected areas as essentially a military undertaking, and whose answer to “whose responsibility is it?” might be that only those deeply committed to the task can save great apes (can they ever really be “safe?”), and that, contrary to Caldecott’s urgings, this can only happen if we place the survival of apes above well-meaning concerns for providing employment and education opportunities for local people, helping them to preserve traditional values and to develop extractive reserves where feasible, and so on.

Indeed, much of the material in these chapters explicitly or implicitly reveals the tensions among issues like attention to human needs, development, resource over-

exploitation, and strict protection. The book does not offer a radical critique of the world of conservation NGOs and ICDPs and of the world financial system—it is still within the liberal conservation mainstream—but it comes closer than would have been likely only a few years ago. For example, Redmond (p. 290) states that “the hard reality is that the relatively small sums available for conservation are no match for the massive economic pressures to exploit or destroy ape habitats” and rightly puts major blame on resource extraction by people in the wealthy world. However, simply to “source raw materials from ape habitats more carefully (p. 290)” won’t solve the problems. I might sleep better if I knew the capacitor in my laptop wasn’t made with coltan illegally mined in eastern DRC, but ending mass consumption of gorillas and other wildlife there will require – for a start – ending a system based on infinite consumption of goods like laptops and cell phones and in which we are indoctrinated to see consumption as virtuous behavior that somehow, inevitably, will bring development to the DRC and other great ape host countries so long as we follow the rules and all holders get their stakes.

The third major part of the book provides country-by-country summaries, the authors of which work in them, or work for conservation NGOs with some history of local involvement and of available information on great ape distributions and populations, specific threats, national legislation and conservation actions, political and economic conditions, and other topics. Palm oil plantations, military conflicts, uncontrolled mining and logging, etc., again repeatedly rear their ugly heads, but so do occasional success stories (or effective holding actions?). The chapters include distribution maps that simultaneously evoke admiration for the enormous amount of work that went into the book, frustration about the absence of reliable, up-to-date information for many areas, e.g., the Central African Republic and Sudan, and worry that much of the information that was reasonably up-to-date when compiled is already irrelevant. No book could avoid the relevance problem, and this is probably the best effort possible; hopefully most of the documentation won’t soon become simply historical.

Most of the vast number of references are available only online, along with other supplementary material and many relevant web links. This practice, which probably will become common, has virtues and drawbacks. It presumably cuts production costs (and saves trees), and, while the need to be online instead of paging through a reference section is slightly annoying, it allows those of us with ready access to the Internet and to electronic journals to follow up on particular topics quickly. Most of our colleagues in great ape host countries, their students, and the people in their governments won’t have this easy access. But then, they have almost no access to print sources either: just a small glimpse of the enormous problems involved in providing better education as one step on Caldecott’s path ahead.

## References

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