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Book Reviews

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Source: Ardea, 100(2) : 215-216

Published By: Netherlands Ornithologists' Union

URL: https://doi.org/10.5253/078.100.0215

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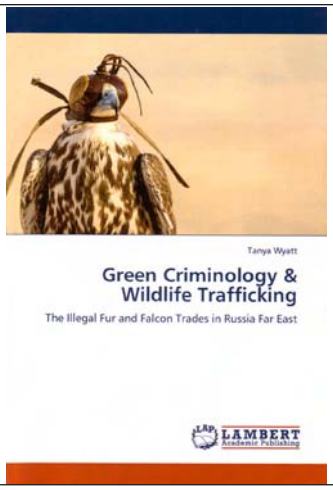
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Wyatt T. 2012. Green criminology & wildlife trafficking. The illegal fur and falcon trades in Russia Far East. Lambert Academic Publishing, Saarbrücken. Paperback, 380 pp. 14 figs. EUR 76.99.

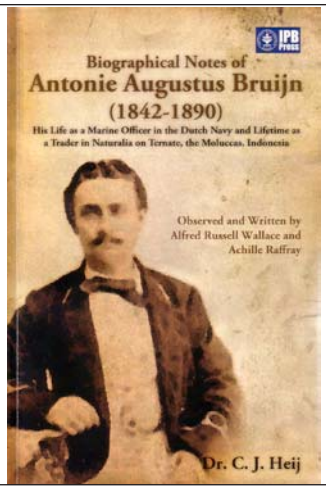


Green criminology, the term used by Tanya Wyatt, encompasses a wide range of human behaviours focused at making illegal money from natural resources, and includes wildlife trafficking, smuggling, theft, corruption, terrorism... It is not much different from trade in drugs or weapons, but has received less attention because "this set of trades, i.e. wildlife trafficking, is so clearly linked to the insatiable consumer demand of wealthy countries". Add a former empire in the throes of newly embraced capitalism, after decades of state-controlled economics, a high poverty rate, poor law enforcement, corruption as a way of life and a thriving black market (high cost–value differential), and the scene is set for unmitigated plunder. The fur trade in particular is huge, a multi-billion dollar industry with a well-established infrastructure, in fact the perfect candidate for illegal trade after the break-up of the USSR. In contrast, the raptor trade was on a much smaller specialised scale, with legal exports of hundreds or – rarely – thousands of raptors to Japan and Europe (mainly Czechoslovakia and Germany), where they ended up in zoos, circuses, private collections, or commerce. Northern Goshawks used to be the most commonly exported species until 1992, when Sakers started to become in larger demand. Surprisingly, through 2006 Japan imported more raptors than the United Arab Emirates, that is: legally. The opening of borders after the demise of the Soviet Union coincided with a steep increase in raptor trade. At the start of the 21st century, ornithologists were in no doubt that illegal trade had a direct bearing on Saker declines. From 1991 to 1996, most of the poaching and smuggling took place in Kazakhstan and Kyrgystan, then independent countries, but as soon as their Saker populations became depleted, poaching spread into Russian territory (and Mongolia). The list of seizures of contraband raptors by Customs since the mid-1990s is impressive, with hundreds of Sakers, Peregrine Falcons and Gyrfalcons annually being confiscated at airports on their way to the Middle East. Many of these birds die from maltreatment. Wyatt consulted a range of Russian sources to get an idea of what's going on, published officially in print as well as online, and by interviewing officials, analysing questionnaires and visiting wildlife markets. These data seem to contradict those published by CITES, the latter reporting little illicit transnational trade and Japan as the main destiny for legal wild birds. It only shows that real life can be very different from official figures, and in this regard it remains to be seen whether or not use is being made of falsified documentation of captive birds as a means of transporting illegally caught wild raptors. This sad story of human greed is extensively reviewed and put into perspective regarding legislation and organised crime. As the story is told from the Russian background, i.e. the exporter of fur and falcons, the receiving end of the line remains largely out of focus. Perhaps this explains why the myth of Middle Eastern falconry is perpetrated, as if "personal commitment to falconry ensures a practice in the correct manner, with the proper respect due to Islamic customs". That's a chutzpah, to say the least. Those customs apparently allow wholesale plunder of wildlife in other people's countries. Also, it seems naive to suggest that the use of raptors is in decline in Europe; the truth is that demand is increasing now that non-falconers are allowed to keep raptors in captivity. An online trip suffices to see the point. Wyatt suggests many paths to solve the problems surrounding wildlife trade, and she rightly identifies the consumer's demand as the driver of the market. Legislation and enforcement are important means to an end, in this case eradicating illegal wildlife trade, but it is the affluent consumer that triggers green criminology.

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Heij C.J. 2011. Biographical notes of Antonie Augustus Bruijn (1842–1890). PT Penerbit IPB Press, Bogor. Softback, XIV + 148 pp. ISBN 978-979-493-294-0. EUR 13.50 on bank account 511071, in name of Natuurhistorisch Museum Rotterdam (mention 'book Bruijn' and address).



Dutch naval officer and merchant Antonie Augustus Bruijn is an enigma. His name lives on in Bruijn's Brush-turkey *Aepypodius bruijnii*, known from 23 skins collected between 1880 and 1904, then again one in 1938, to be lost from living memory until its recent rediscovery. Most of these skins landed in museums through Antonie Bruijn's activities as a dealer in naturalia (for museums, but also for the bird plume trade). The bird was rediscovered in December 2000, when local people captured, killed and ate a megapode from which they saved the head and some bones, a Bruijn's Brush-turkey, as it turned out. Finally, as late as 2002, in the summit area of Mount Nok on the Raja Ampat Islands in West Papua, New Guinea, an incubation mound was found and a living bird was seen and described (Mauro 2005, Emu 105: 273–281). Bruijn's name is lacking from Voous' monumental dictionary of Dutch ornithologists. After reading the 148 pages of this biography, it is understandable that its author refers to 'biographical notes' rather than to a full-fledged biography. History has eradicated much about Bruijn. Born on 27 December 1842, he followed the family's tradition and entered the Royal Dutch Navy in 1857, but was honourably discharged only ten years later. During his tenure he stayed several times at Ternate, one of the islands in the Moluccas in eastern Indonesia from where the Dutch traded with the rest of the world. It was here that Antonie Bruijn settled after his naval discharge in 1867, married a daughter of local businessman Maarten Dirksz van Duivenbode, and became involved in the naturalia trade (or plunder, if you like), then – as now – a huge world-encompassing enterprise. Interestingly, Ternate had been a temporary respite for Alfred Russel Wallace, the very place where the fevered Wallace wrote down his version of the evolutionary theory in early 1858. This idea reached Charles Darwin by letter on 18 June 1858, and became the trigger for the bogged-down Darwin to succinctly formulate his theory of evolution and has it published as *The origin of species by means of natural selection* in 1859. The presence of Wallace on Ternate receives a separate chapter in the present biography, based on Wallace's *The Malay Archipelago* (published in 1869). It is expanded and illustrated with notes and photographs of visits made by the author in 2003 and 2004. The history of Ternate is also highlighted, but the author failed to find the tombstone of Bruijn (who supposedly died on Ternate on 1 August 1890) at the delapidated Dutch cemetery which has in effect become a rubbish dump. Very little information is known of Bruijn as a bird trader, except that fieldwork and collection of birds was contracted out to expeditions and local people, and that he was a poor labeller of specimens. The biographical notes contain a translated letter to the Geographical Institute at Amsterdam, signed Ternate, 10 July 1877, with details of one such expedition to the Lands of the Karons, based on information from expedition's leader Leon Laglaize. The notes prove that the vague picture of Bruijn on the front cover is a fitting reminder of the man, a mystery that remains a mystery. Nonetheless, the book is a nice try to elucidate a minor part of Dutch ornithology, but would have benefited from tighter editing.

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