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The Goshawk

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The Goshawk.—Robert Kenward. 2006. T & AD Poyser, London. 360 pp., 23 color plates, 137 text figures, 2 appendices. ISBN-10:0-7136-6565-3. Cloth, $52.50.—Over the past several decades, the Northern Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*; hereafter "goshawk") has been the focus of intense controversy in North America and Europe because of its association with mature forests and, thus, the potential for conflict with forest harvest. In Europe, its notoriety is enhanced by its tendency to prey on birds of economic and social importance, such as grouse, poultry, and domestic pigeons, as well as its popular use in falconry. This interest in the goshawk has generated extensive scientific inquiry, making this species one of the world's most well-studied raptors. Although several recent ornithological publications have summarized the scientific information on this species (e.g., *Studies in Avian Biology* vol. 31 and *Journal of Raptor Research* vol. 39, no. 3), these summaries tend to be based on the North American literature. In *The Goshawk*, Kenward provides the first truly comprehensive overview of goshawk ecology and management. Although he uses an author's prerogative to rely heavily on his long-term research on goshawks in the United Kingdom, Sweden, and the Baltic Island of Gotland, he does an excellent job of summarizing the vast scientific and nonscientific information throughout the species' range, including

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the non-English-speaking literature (e.g., Russia, eastern Europe) typically avoided by North Americans.

The book is organized into 10 chapters covering taxonomy, morphometrics, breeding biology, movements, diet and foraging, predation effects, population dynamics, falconry, other population-management practices, and conservation through protection and use. Kenward begins each chapter with a personal narrative, related to the chapter topic, about his experience with goshawks. Each chapter consists primarily of a summary of the literature and ends with a bulleted list of conclusions. With the exception of the last two chapters, each also has an ending section on the implications of this information to conservation and management. The illustrations, by Alan Harris, include 23 color figures of goshawks that are embedded as a group in chapter 3. Throughout the text, there are 137 figures that summarize scientific findings. There are two appendices: (1) a summary of scientific names of vertebrates mentioned in the text and (2) a list of sources for figures that used data from more than 10 publications. The book ends with 45 pages of references, and this alone is worth the price.

Kenward's mastery of the literature and his vast experience with goshawks as a researcher and falconer result in some very thought-provoking insights into goshawk ecology and management. He reminds us that the goshawk is not just a resident of vast, contiguous forests but commonly nests in agricultural landscapes with little wooded acreage and near urban areas. He provides thought-provoking insights as to why goshawks in North America may be more dependent on forests than those in Europe and discusses the conservation implications of these differences in habitat-use patterns.

One of his most intriguing chapters was chapter 7, "Prey Selection and Predation Pressures." Because of the conservation status of the goshawk in North America, there is much discussion among North American biologists about the role that prey availability plays in limiting goshawk reproduction and the effect that forest management may have on prey populations. However, there is rarely discussion about the role that goshawks may play in limiting prey populations (but see Squires and Kennedy 2006). Kenward provides evidence that in some European landscapes, goshawk predation pressure may depress prey populations. When these prey populations are of socioeconomic importance (e.g., harvested galliforms, threatened birds), controlling goshawk depredation may be a viable management option. This clearly illustrates the uniqueness of the goshawk from a management perspective; in parts of its range, it is managed as a species of conservation concern to halt potential declines, and in other parts, individuals are removed (lethally and nonlethally) to reduce animal damage. In the last chapter, Kenward presents an intriguing global conservation strategy for goshawks that integrates these conflicting stakeholder interests into the management and monitoring process.

The synthetic approach to the literature and Kenward's thought-provoking conservation strategies are the strengths of this book. However, the format and organization could have been improved. Having the first two chapters cover taxonomy and morphometrics follows ornithological convention in species accounts, where these topics are presented first, but this material is very dry and does not inspire the reader to continue reading (except those writing book reviews). Enticing the reader with a summary of the fascinating conservation history of the goshawk might have been better introductory material.

Patterns observed by Kenward but not supported by the data he presents occur in most of the chapters, most extensively in the morphometrics chapter. For example, he cites figure 18 as evidence that the average mass of shot hawks was greater than that of live hawks, but these distributions do not appear to differ. Also, many of the figures were difficult to read because they presented multiple variables that could not be differentiated by the degree of shading (e.g., fig. 77) or had x or y variables that were difficult to interpret (e.g., captures as percentage of expected captures on the y-axis in fig. 65). The book also needed more proofing, because the typographical errors are numerous enough to be distracting. Finally, as a resident of a country known globally for its geographically challenged populace, I chortled with glee at the numerous errors in North American place names and locations that reflect the author's lack of familiarity with the North American landscape (e.g., he places one of my studies in New Mexico, but it was conducted in Utah).

In spite of these criticisms, this book is an excellent addition to Poyser's reference books on birds. It provides background for the naive reader interested in goshawk natural history and conservation but is also a key reference for anyone studying and managing goshawks and other Holarctic raptors. Those interested in creative solutions for managing predators should add this book to their library.—Patricia L. Kennedy, *Eastern Oregon Agricultural Research Center and Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, Oregon State University, Union, Oregon 97883, USA. E-mail: pat.kennedy@oregonstate.edu*

Literature Cited

Squires, J. R., and P. L. Kennedy. 2006. Northern Goshawk ecology: An assessment of current knowledge and information needs for conservation and management. Pages 8–62 *in* The Northern Goshawk: A Technical Assessment of Its Status, Ecology, and Management (M. L. Morrison, Ed.). Studies in Avian Biology, no. 31.

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