

Book Reviews

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Source: The Auk, 127(2) : 466

Published By: American Ornithological Society

URL: <https://doi.org/10.1525/auk.2010.127.2.466>

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Book Reviews

EDITED BY R. TODD ENGSTROM

The following critiques express the opinions of the individual evaluators regarding the strengths, weaknesses, and value of the books they review. As such, the appraisals are subjective assessments and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the editors or any official policy of the American Ornithologists' Union.

The Auk 127(2):466, 2010
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Printed in USA.

The Birds of Borneo.—Clive F. Mann. 2008. BOU Checklist No. 23. British Ornithologists' Union, Peterborough, United Kingdom. xvi + 440 pp., 68 color plates, 2 text figures. ISBN 9780907446286. Hardback, \$81.00.—In reviewing this volume, it is inevitable that I make a comparison with the similarly titled *The Birds of Borneo* by B. E. Smythies (1999, 4th ed. revised by G. W. H. Davison). Smythies and Davison provided detailed species accounts, including description, voice, habits, nests and eggs, and taxonomic remarks, as well as a general description of distribution, for all the birds of Borneo. *The Birds of Borneo* (2008; hereafter “the Checklist”) differs in that it has no descriptions of appearance, sounds, or habits and has only short summaries of habitat and the timing of nest records. The Checklist primarily serves as a list of known locations, with sources, where each of 630 bird species was recorded on Borneo and nearby islands, and in this respect it gives more detail than Smythies (1999). The location lists are generally thorough, although not entirely complete for all species, as some relevant papers are not cited. A search for the key words “bird” and “Borneo” in the online literature search engines Zoological Record and Web of Science yields at least 12 papers published between 1987 and 2007 that contain information on bird distributions on Borneo. Only six of these are cited in the Checklist. Papers published in ornithological journals are all represented in the citation list, but studies published in ecological or conservation journals are largely missing. Another potential source of bird locations for this checklist that remained unused is the online collection of bird sounds at www.xeno-canto.org/asia, where numerous Bornean bird species are documented with sound recordings, locations, and dates, including some locations not covered in the Checklist. Nevertheless, although missing a few sources, the Checklist by and large provides an accurate, referenced overview of the current knowledge of Bornean bird distributions. The Checklist, unlike Smythies (1999), includes 26 color photographs of Bornean birds and a beautiful and informative collection of 42 color photographs of different habitat types on Borneo.—MARTJAN LAMMERTINK, *Cornell Lab of Ornithology, 159 Sapsucker Woods Road, Ithaca, New York 14850, USA. E-mail: jml243@cornell.edu*

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SMYTHIES, B. E. 1999. *The Birds of Borneo*, 4th ed. (G. W. H. Davison, Ed.). Sabah Society Natural History Publications, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia.

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