

The book has a clearly defined structure, opening with Gow's farming background, followed by chapters covering his work caring for and restoring native wildlife, and concluding with his thoughts on the conservation sector. This structure is emphasized by the author's own illustrations of focal species at the start of each chapter, with my personal favourite being the drawing of a water vole entering its nest.

Where Gow excels best as an author is the vivid imagery he conjures in just a few words. Graphic moments such as a fox carcass becoming a water vole latrine will cast light on the reality of working with wild animals to those unfamiliar with conservation work. Although on occasion the jargon may go beyond the understanding of someone outside the farming community, Gow's anecdotes will still appeal to readers familiar with James Herriot's work. From rampaging bisons to biting wildcats, Gow engages all senses to draw the reader into his world; instead of simply stating that he helped deliver the first heck cattle to Britain, he pulls his readers in with lorries that 'lurched through the potholes', their 'pneumatic brakes hissing' and their backs full of cattle whose 'hot breath steamed and dung splattered' from within (p. 85).

Gow's descriptive language extends to the presentation of his personal views and beliefs. He has nostalgia for a 'much less indulgent age' (p. 106) and likens aspects of modern conservation to work that 'trained teams of lower primates with crayons' could do (p. 174). Coming from 'a hearty tribe that kept sheep and cattle' where 'outside [the] tribe [lay] enemies: vegans, conservationists' (p. 71), he is not afraid to criticize those with a different point of view. His description of a woman from Natural England as 'whining' and existing with 'blind unenthusiasm' (p. 79) is just one example of how disengaged he is with certain professional conservationists. As this book is a personal rather than unbiased account, it is only natural that readers will not always agree with the author. I, for example, do not agree that 'it's always individuals ... who change things' (p. 51) or that 'no evidence means no animals are present is a 'fatal' way of thinking (p. 124), but I presume this stems from my own academic background in contrast to Gow's farming one. Readers who do not like to have their beliefs challenged might take offence.

Despite his non-academic background, Gow often eloquently explains academic concepts. Of particular note are the ways in which he describes the cause behind wildcat declines, the impact bison can have on woodland structure, and the reason why we cannot always determine if a species is truly native. Unfortunately, however, zoological intricacies are not always accounted for. Gow contradicts his own belief

that the correct ecological niche should be filled during reintroductions; he calls the difference between the non-native, hybrid edible frogs and native, genetically pure pool frogs a 'petty detail' (p. 127), when in reality hybrid genetics can prevent an animal from filling the desired niche. Additionally, in the last chapter Gow criticizes the hurdles to reintroduction without acknowledging that if things go wrong when you have not jumped the right hurdles, then subsequent reintroductions become more difficult.

Although I do not always agree with Gow's opinions, I do support his ultimate goal of returning to a less organized and more wild state of living. To me, this book highlights the importance of defining the end goal of conservation, so that collaboration is encouraged even where personal views may differ. I believe this book will be of interest to anybody who wants to learn about Gow's experience with our native species and get an insight into the numerous projects in which he has played an important role. However, perhaps more important is its being read by academically trained conservationists, so they may appreciate a different perspective and continue to seek solutions that account for the wide variety of actors in the conservation endeavour.

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Wildlife Management and Landscapes: Principles and Applications edited by William F. Porter, Chad J. Parent, Rosemary A. Stewart & David M. Williams (2021) 360 pp., Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, USA. ISBN 978-1-4214-4020-0 (e-book), USD 74.95.

I picked up this book keen to learn more about habitats, landscapes and their role in wildlife conservation. With contributions from nearly 50 authors, it offers a landscape perspective in the management of wildlife and habitats, with a detailed synopsis of essential principles and applications. The content is structured into four major themes: (1) understanding habitats on a landscape level, (2) providing a foundation of landscape knowledge for wildlife managers, (3) establishing the basics of wildlife management for landscape ecologists, and (4) translating knowledge of landscape ecology into management actions.

In Part I, Understanding Habitats on Landscapes, the book elaborates on the landscape perspective in wildlife and habitat management, the roots of landscape ecology, and wildlife-landscape relationships as a foundation for managing habitats on landscapes. The authors emphasize the need for collaborative approaches for effective wildlife and

habitat management. In particular, collaboration is required between landscape ecologists, who design research projects, assess quantitative data and publish their findings, and natural resource managers, who interpret scientific research and apply it to manage habitats and natural resources on the ground. Although undoubtedly such collaboration between subject experts and managers is vital for effective conservation, I believe sociologists and communication experts need to be added in the collaboration equation. Sociologists can mobilize communities who are key in effective wildlife and habitat management, and communication experts help with the important task of simplifying the scientific jargon and clarifying messages for local communities, to ensure a shared understanding and successful community engagement.

Part II, Establishing a Landscape Foundation for Wildlife Managers, details the essential concepts in landscape ecology for wildlife and natural resource managers, highlights the use of landscape ecology to inform effective management, and describes approaches for translating land-cover datasets into habitat features. It also provides insights into the influence of habitat loss and fragmentation on wildlife populations and the importance of data collection and quantitative considerations for studying pattern-process relationships in landscapes. This part of the book essentially lays the foundation for successful integration of landscape ecology and wildlife management by introducing important terminologies and presenting them in context.

Part III, Establishing a Wildlife Management Foundation for Landscape Ecologists, delves into managing wildlife at landscape scales and provides suggestions for improving communication between landscape ecologists and managers. The authors describe challenges and opportunities in developing useful spatially explicit habitat models and support tools that can aid decision-making in the management of wildlife and landscapes. This part also highlights the importance of conservation incentive programmes to facilitate conservation on privately owned land, noting the need for conservation to be economically competitive to other land uses if it is to succeed on land that is in private hands.

Lastly, Part IV, Translating Landscape Ecology to Management, covers aspects such as the composition of ecological communities of species as key to habitat management at all scales, and argues for a joint venture approach for agencies, organizations, corporations, communities and individuals to implement local or national conservation plans for given species. It also shines a light on how to translate landscape ecology to management and take a cooperative approach to landscape conservation. Mapping of priority

areas for species conservation is included here, as is the role of NGOs and their approach to landscape conservation. These topics are handled in adequate depth and breadth.

Overall, the book provides a great level of detail, with concepts and strategies of wildlife management adequately covered. It also provides an outline of the factors that influence

species occurrence and thus affect landscape and habitat management. The photographs, illustrations, maps and figures are of good quality and help convey its message.

In conclusion, *Wildlife Management and Landscapes* has helped me broaden my understanding of the subject matter, particularly on the value of ecological models as tools to

support decision-making and conservation planning. I would recommend this book as a valuable resource in higher education and as a worthwhile addition to the toolkit of natural resource management practitioners.

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