

# Publications

**Hymenoptera and Conservation** by T.R. New (2012), 230 pp., Wiley-Blackwell, Oxford, UK. ISBN 9780470671801 (hbk), GBP 60.00.

Within ecology and conservation, entomology is an understudied discipline. Even within the relatively well-studied group Hymenoptera (the order containing bees, wasps and ants), attention is disproportionately focused on social species, specifically of the family Apidae (a family containing honeybees and bumblebees), following concerns about the instability of pollination services. However, this family only represents a fraction of a large and diverse order, with estimates suggesting that Parasitica (a group within Hymenoptera containing parasitoid wasps) comprises 1 million species worldwide. Despite the accepted ecological importance of parasitoid wasps, this group is extremely understudied, with the majority of species remaining undescribed. In *Hymenoptera and Conservation* Tim New emphasizes this underrepresentation through a thought-provoking review, combining scientific evidence with case studies to portray the overarching theme of this book: how bias in research on Hymenoptera and a knowledge deficit of the true scale of this order limits the application of conservation science.

New sets the scene by delivering a sombre report of past interventions, whereby, within the context of a lack of long-term and community-level studies, poor understanding of the polyphagous nature and adaptability of introduced species has resulted in ecological instability at a large scale. He highlights the complexity of interactions at the ecosystem level and illustrates the need for caution when assuming the transference of knowledge from well-studied species to the order Hymenoptera as a whole. For example, when this knowledge is taken out of context from the environment in which the organism has been studied, and applied to a conservation intervention (e.g. reintroduction), such information can have damaging and unpredicted effects, especially when species composition is not fully understood in the area where it is to be applied.

The book reiterates the struggle both financially and practically of remedying earlier interventions. To demonstrate this point he reports on how accidental introductions of social insects together with the continual practice of pollinator provisioning have implications for conservation, including: out-competition of native species, parasite spill-over, floral destruction, hybridization and local extinction. Based on these impacts

he emphasizes the importance of moving away from reliance upon the transportation of generalist pollinators and instead suggests that research and policy be focused on the creation and maintenance of habitat to support native pollinators.

New offers insight into the future of conservation by bridging the gap between past and present conservation practices. He discusses the move away from a generalized, one policy fits all approach to species conservation towards a structured policy built on past experiences. He assesses the limitations and successes of past practices, restoring optimism through case studies that demonstrate the resilience of organisms and the surprising diversity within fragmented and urbanized habitats. He continues to present a balanced outlook of the current schemes targeting species diversity. In doing so he accepts the importance of incentive-led policies in delivering successful implementation, whilst also accepting the potential reluctance by land owners to support schemes such as set aside, which can cause problems such as pest reservoirs.

The concluding chapters in *Hymenoptera and Conservation* reiterate the need for an invertebrate focus in conservation, developing identifiable frameworks to facilitate the designation of conservation priorities. New uses case studies of vulnerable and topical species to portray this point, noting that in some cases no further intervention is the most appropriate prescription. Future strategies should look not only for a deeper knowledge of biological systems and the full extent of species involved but also for a realistic understanding of what can be achieved, applying a target-driven approach with quantifiable monitoring schemes in place to measure success.

In *Hymenoptera and Conservation* New captures the reader, offering a concise chronology of past interventions and, in doing so, provides lessons on which future conservation strategies can be built. For this reason, I recommend this book to anyone interested in a better understanding of the role of insects in conservation as well as the full implications of intervention.

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**Life, Fish and Mangroves: Resource Governance in Coastal Cambodia** by Melissa Marschke (2012), 192 pp., University of Ottawa

Press, Ottawa, Canada. ISBN 9780776607726 (pbk), GBP 19.99.

In the best-selling novel *Catch-22*, set in Italy in World War II, Captain John Yossarian has a problem. He doesn't want to fly any more combat missions because, he says, people are trying to kill him—which they are. So he requests a psychiatric evaluation to declare him unfit to fly. But since only a sane person would not want to fly a combat mission, anyone requesting such an evaluation would, in fact, be fit to fly. This, now well-known, type of situation is called a catch 22.

In *Life, Fish and Mangroves: Resource Governance in Coastal Cambodia*, Melissa Marschke uses catch 22 to describe a situation that is probably more common in conservation and resource governance than we'd like to believe. In Chrouy Pros Bay the resource management committees have the authority, given to them by the Department of Fisheries, to patrol the Bay to spot and confront illegal trawling. However, they must have a police officer or a technical officer of the Department with them. But the police aren't interested, and the Fisheries department doesn't have the capacity to send a technical officer. The resource committees have a mandate to patrol but of course are not allowed to patrol—catch 22.

*Life, Fish and Mangroves* is a decade-long research endeavour by Marschke, showcasing her attempt to understand (1) how livelihoods shift, evolve and adapt in resource-dependent coastal communities in Cambodia, (2) the role of decentralized resource governance in such situations, and (3) the potential for multiple forms of governance in situations where decline of resources has severe livelihood implications. Such questions are clearly important in a context such as Cambodia, a country ranked 139 on the Human Development Index and where an estimated 75% of all protein consumed in rural areas comes from fish. Add to this dependence the suggestion that most coastal and freshwater fisheries in Cambodia are already overfished (Pomeroy et al., 2007, *Marine Policy*, 31, 645–656; Salayo et al., 2008, *Marine Policy*, 32, 692–700.), and we have a clear call for sustainable fisheries governance as soon as possible.

Decentralization of resource governance, which has swept the developing world in the past 2 decades, holds for fisheries in Cambodia as well. As Marschke relates to us, in the early 1990s only a handful of community fisheries existed and now there are well over 450. Throughout the book we learn about this