



Birds of Botswana: Book Review

The book entitled 'Birds of Botswana' written by Peter Hancock and Ingrid Weiersbye edited by Dr. Stephanie J. Tyler, is an excellent field guide for correct identification of birds. The author has compiled his twenty five years of experience devoted to the study of avian fauna inhabiting varied ecological niches of Botswana in this book.

This is a perfect guide to visit a place to study avian diversity. The author has given a brief geographic position of Botswana, its seasonality, rainfall and surrounding countries. Three Biogeographic biomes includes Zambebian, Transition and Kalahari-Highveld. The vegetation and habitat types such as Zambebian woodlands, Northern Kalahari mixed woodland and scrub, Freshwater wetlands, Northwestern Kalahari tree and bush savanna, Makgadikgadi Pans, Eastern hardveld, Southeastern grasslands, Kalahari tree and bush savanna and Arid scrub savanna have been described in brief. Birds of Botswana include the description of 595 species of which 415 are resident, 71 Palearctic migrants, 67 Intrafrican migrants and 2 Nearctic migrants.

To view this bewildering variety of birds, authors have very categorically described 12 important birds and biodiversity areas. For a beginner or bird watcher who wants to consult this book author has meticulously highlighted in blue boxes the families followed by species specific characteristic and illustration in facing page. Description of individual species include common names, species names, measurements, identification, call, status (migratory, breeding) abundance (rare, scarce, uncommon, common, abundant) habitat, habits, conservation status (least concern, near threatened, vulnerable endangered) endemism, brood parasitism etc.

Illustrations in the book mark its high quality and features described therein highlighting range maps and breeding bars add to its value. Descriptions of detailed bird topography and feathers have made the book more users centric. Glossary of common terms used in book are described right in the beginning provide the wings to fly with reader.

Birds of Botswana embody 1200 outstanding coloured illustration with detailed species accounts. I value this book as top ranking field guide for birds not only of Botswana but of the world. The contents are well organized with sound scholarships and superb illustrations. I am confident that this book will prove to be great help in spreading awareness about birds in general and help avian conservation. This book is a ready rechner for students, bird photographers, ornithologists and scholars associated with habitat protection and bird conservation.

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