Book Reviews

Wildlife of East Africa

Martin Withers and David Hosking
Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000
US \$19.95, 249 pages, softcover

A pocket-guide book for the serious traveler, this compilation by Martin Withers and David Hosking is nearly picture-perfect. Small enough to fit into a large safari pocket and light enough to travel comfortably in a pack, it is a nice intermediate between coffee-table picture books and lesser-quality paperbacks.

The book is organized with bird watchers in mind; after a 20-page general introduction, the first 135 pages carry at least 700 photos of birds. Mammals follow with 70 pages, then reptiles, amphibians, insects, and trees and flowers. The descriptions are on the opposing pages, and the photographs in reference are marked by gridlike images. It is a little confusing for the eye but avoids 250 pages of repetitive A-B-Cs or 1-2-3s as identifiers.

The photos and descriptions, arguably the most important part of the book, are, for the most part, nicely done. I qualify this because I am a casual wildlifer, yet I noticed immediately that the Burchell's zebra (*Equus burchelli*) is mislabeled as a common zebra (*Equus quagga*), which is extinct and was from southern, not eastern, Africa. This is important because there are only 2 species of zebra in eastern Africa, and by far the most common that you will see is the Burchell's zebra. The other, the Grevy's zebra, is currently endangered.

The descriptions are "diagnostic" and tell of the eating habits of the animals but purposely exclude, and therefore miss out on, an easy opportunity to impart behavioral information that enhances viewing. For example, elephants are matriarchal; therefore, all herds that a person sees consist of females, and all single elephants roaming the plains are males. Zebras have very strict dominance rules and walk in a single-file line that is dictated by their rank in the herd.

Other appealing aspects of this book are the quality of the pictures, the pages, and the print. The photos are all color and have very good resolution. The pages are a matte finish, neither thin enough to tear nor thick enough to add unwarranted weight. The print is small, probably about a 9-point font, but the authors sacrifice text size to ensure that the photo descriptions always fit onto the adjacent, visible page.

Wildlife of East Africa is a good pocket guide; indeed, it is the best that I have seen available. I think this guidebook will be best used if the traveler also brings a larger

book containing behavioral information to keep in the room when returning from safari.

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Performance-Enhancing Substances in Sport and Exercise

Michael S. Bahrke and Charles E. Yesalis
Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics, 2002
US \$57.00, 369 pages, hardcover

Recently, the subject of performance-enhancing substances has been front-page news. Athletes are implicated, and more questions arise: How do these drugs truly affect performance, and what kind of deleterious consequences do they cause? Although much has been written on the dangers of the use of performance-enhancing substances, most books offer little more than sensational claims and scare tactics.

Charles Yesalis, one of the world's top steroid authorities, teams up with Michael Bahrke, a fellow of the American Academy of Sports Medicine, to provide straightforward and balanced documentation on performance-enhancing substances—how they function, how they affect performance, and the subsequent health concerns they elicit. In its entirety, this book is an effective summary of the research behind performance-enhancing substances, and some particular chapters offer fascinating details on various components of this subject.

Well written with many references, the book presents the history of doping on sport and exercise, including clinical and scientific research, and certain legal aspects of substance use. The authors include significant information on testing and discuss emerging technologies, such as gene transfer therapy, as well as new drug delivery systems that have the potential for abuse. They also provide an equally interesting chronicle of drug testing—how the technology to test has advanced and how steroid users have eluded such efforts.

In short, this is a comprehensive and current text on the use and abuse of performance-enhancing substances among athletes. Yesalis, who is a professor of health policy administration, exercise, and sport science at Pennsylvania State University, says, "It would be wonderful if athletes did not use performance-enhancing substances, but they do and they are not going to stop." Considering the prevalence, both known and alleged, of