

# Publications

**Human–Wildlife Interactions: Turning Conflict into Coexistence** edited by Beatrice Frank, Jenny A. Glikman & Silvio Marchini (2019) 476 pp., Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK. ISBN 978-1-108402583 (pbk), GBP 34.99.

Fifteen years ago when Cambridge University Press published *People and Wildlife: Conflict or Coexistence?* it was one of the first books to bring the term ‘coexistence’ into conservation parlance, albeit in measured ways. Although the editors of the book examined the idea of coexistence as a new way in conservation, most of the chapters approached the topic from a mitigation and/or damage-control perspective. Now, more than a decade later, a sequel (*Human–Wildlife Interactions: Turning Conflict into Coexistence*) has been published that adds significantly to the previous book and duly justifies the need for another book on the topic. In the years since the first book was published, significant developments have been made in the field of human–wildlife interaction (yes, use of the term human–wildlife conflict is passé now) and the new book is a brilliant testimonial of this progress. The title of the book itself reflects the growing trend in conservation research and practice whereby people and wildlife are no longer posited as adversaries but as co-inhabitants living together through good and bad experiences.

There has been an increasing understanding, particularly in the last decade or so, that human–wildlife conflicts, or negative interactions, are often the outcomes or manifestations of more deep rooted human–human conflict. To decipher these underlying human–human conflicts and seek out human drivers of conservation, it has become imperative to study human behaviour, attitudes, motivations, values, institutions and every other human factor that impinges upon people’s interaction with wildlife. Conservation researchers have heeded to this call and have employed a range of theories and concepts to understand the interactions between people and wildlife and explore ways of coexistence. In this evolutionary timeline, this book is a timely resource, lending coherence to the human dimension theme and also guiding future directions.

The book contains 20 chapters, with the first five devoted to defining coexistence and laying out the theoretical bricolage that underpins coexistence. The introductory chapter by Frank & Glikman sets out the stage for the book and their ‘conflict-to-coexistence continuum’ framework gives the book a flow

and consistency that is often difficult to achieve in an edited volume. Chapters 2–5 depict a wide spectrum of social and psychological theories ranging from values, emotions, identity and tolerance to explicate the conflict-to-coexistence framework, and do this thoroughly. Having said this, however, one feels that the linearity of the conflict-to-coexistence continuum is often oversimplified and the precarity of balance between conflict and coexistence is addressed late (in Chapter 20) in the book.

Chapters 6–14 are a mix of case studies featuring different species, although the focus is on terrestrial taxa. The case studies in themselves are interesting and informative, although the theoretical rigour is not the same across the chapters. For instance, whereas in Chapter 7 Skogen et al. firmly set the human–predator interaction within the broader framework of landscape and land-use, Sakurai’s description of collaborative coexistence projects in rural Japan in Chapter 9 could have been supported by wider discussions on theories of social capital and cultural ecology. The majority of the case studies deliver on proposing novel approaches to understanding or achieving coexistence, although in some chapters, such as Chapters 10 and 13, one could question whether there is substantial value addition there or whether these read more like a repackaging of older approaches. Additionally, one cannot help but notice the North-American and Eurocentric bias in the selection of case studies, which is disconcerting considering that most biodiversity rich areas are located in the Global South and side-lining this region means missing opportunities to learn about more organically developed coexistence between humans and wildlife.

I consider the final chapters (Chapters 15–19) to be the strongest elements of this publication. From discussing new strategies (Chapter 16) to listing important resources and focus areas to achieve coexistence (Chapter 19), these chapters deliver pragmatic solutions that could benefit conservation science immensely. In fact, I feel that many important concepts and constructs broached in these chapters, such as transboundary conservation (Chapter 18), citizen science and environmental communication (Chapter 19) could have merited individual attention. Furthermore, the book would have had a more well-rounded appeal if newer research methodologies such as multi-species ethnography could have been discussed as a means of configuring the conflict-to-coexistence continuum.

In all, *Human–Wildlife Interactions: Turning Conflict into Coexistence* is a progressive,

forward looking book that will captivate readers and make them dwell on the positives of human–wildlife interactions rather than the negatives. The book could have covered some other significant aspects of the conflict-to-coexistence continuum such as wildlife trade and wildlife tourism, but nevertheless it is a good attempt at bringing together some contemporary ideas and approaches, which will remain relevant and even gain greater prominence in conservation in the future. I think this book, like its predecessor, will be an indispensable addition to the libraries of all conservation researchers and would recommend it highly to everyone who is interested in this field.

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**The Wake of Crows: Living and Dying in Shared Worlds** by Thom van Dooren (2019) 288 pp., Columbia University Press, New York, USA. ISBN: 978-0-231182829 (hbk), GBP 30.00/USD 35.00.

Crows are among our most familiar and charismatic animals and as such there is a wealth of literature dedicated to them with which few other wildlife species compare. Although each contributor takes a distinct perspective and harnesses different stories or features of their biology, there is perhaps nothing as unique in the body of work dedicated to crows as *The Wake of Crows: Living and Dying in Shared Worlds*. It is neither a classic natural history book, nor a memoir of being connected to the natural world through crows. Instead, van Dooren has used crows as a loom on which to weave science and humanities together, producing a thesis of what it means to exist in our contemporary world. Central to this thesis is the question of ‘What else is possible?’ For the traditional science and natural history reader his exploration of this seemingly familiar question will be anything but familiar. Although by now, for example, we may be used to being asked to reconsider the image of the crow as pest or bad omen, here we are asked to reconsider them systematically, and in ways that ultimately inform the reader’s ethic.

The book is organized into five chapters, each of which reflects on a unique theme and takes place in a different part of the world. At the end of each chapter is a complementary vignette that enhances the reader’s connection to crows. Among the chapters,