

BOOK REVIEW

Wildlife Ecology and Management in Mexico

Edited by Raul Valdez and J. Alfonso Ortega-S. 2019. Texas A&M University Press, College Station, Texas, USA. 402 pages (hard cover). \$60.00. ISBN:978-1-62349-723-1

This book is the English-language translation of an earlier work that was published in Spanish. In 2014, Drs. Valdez and Ortega-S. co-edited the volume *Ecología y Manejo de Fauna Silvestre en México*, published by Editorial Colegio de Postgraduados in Mexico. That work (hereafter, *Ecología y Manejo*) was the most complete volume on wildlife and conservation in that country since publication of A. Starker Leopold's 1959 classic, *Wildlife of Mexico: The Game Birds and Mammals*. Leopold's work was translated into Spanish, and was a seminal contribution that stimulated many students and professionals in Mexico to pursue interests in wildlife research and conservation in that country. Sixty years following publication of Leopold's tome, Valdez and Ortega's *Wildlife Ecology and Management in Mexico* has made the tremendous amount of information in their Spanish-language volume, *Ecología y Manejo*, readily available to a vast, English-speaking readership.



The editors brought together a team of 46 experts to contribute to this work. It is especially noteworthy that the majority of contributors are scientists representing Mexican universities or agencies and that are, or previously have been, actively involved in research on or management of birds or mammals in their country. Most of the other contributors also have worked for many years in Mexico, either through affiliations with academic institutions or agencies in that country, or through American universities. Thus, familiarity with the history, policies, and challenges to wildlife conservation, or knowledge of the biology of the taxa discussed in this work largely was gained first-hand.

The book consists of 22 chapters, 5 of which address historical, social, political, or economic aspects of wildlife conservation in Mexico, and the remainder of which are dedicated to various species or groups that represent the primary game birds and large mammals occurring there. Mexico ranks fifth in biodiversity on a world-wide scale. The country is inhabited by 1,107 species of birds and 544 mammals; thus, the current work concerns but a tiny fraction of the avian and mammalian fauna found there. Nevertheless, the taxa addressed are, in many ways, those most apt to require attention from a management or conservation perspective. To that end, Valdez, Ortega-S., and the contributors have produced a volume that not only will have a long-term influence on wildlife management in Mexico, but will be a lasting reference for English-speaking scientists not familiar with conservation and management issues in that country. I believe it will also stimulate more English-speaking scientists to initiate collaborative work with Mexican researchers or managers and, thereby, lead to enhanced efforts on behalf of conservation.

An unfortunate, albeit unavoidable, consequence of the 4-year process involved in producing the English-language edition of *Ecología y Manejo* was the inability to include references to the most recent ongoing work. The literature is complete, however, up to publication of *Ecología y Manejo* and many of the chapters include references published as recently as 2013. From my perspective, this is not an issue that should be of concern to interested readers, and it does not detract from the utility or value of this work. Indeed, among the extremely valuable material included was that dedicated to enhancing the reader's understanding of the historical and conservation perspectives of wildlife (Chapter 1); natural and human landscapes (Chapter 2), wildlife as a public and economic resource (Chapter 3); evolution of wildlife laws and policies (Chapter 21); and challenges to wildlife conservation strategies (Chapter 22) in Mexico. These are topics with which many wildlife biologists—me included—likely would not be familiar, but also are topics central to issues of wildlife conservation, whether game, 'non-game', or endangered species.

Valdez and Ortega-S. are to be commended for producing this book, which will be of value to those working on management and conservation issues in Mexico, as well as those seeking a better understanding of the complexities of conservation in that country. There is much to be learned, and the material included has important implications for the management of wildlife in Mexico and will be a "go-to" source for many years to come. As the first major contribution of this type since Leopold's 1959 effort, publication in English is timely, welcomed, and appreciated.

VERNON C. BLEICH, *Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Science, University of Nevada Reno and Eastern Sierra Center for Applied Population Ecology, Bismarck, ND, USA*