

REVIEWS

Wace, N. M. & Holdgate, M. W. 1976: *Man and Nature in the Tristan da Cunha Islands*. IUCN *Monograph* No. 6. International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, Morges, Switzerland, 1976. 114 pp., 14 figs.

To New Zealand naturalists, subantarctic islands have an irresistible attraction, and because seabird distributions (as emphasised by R. C. Murphy) tend to be circumpolar, following the zones of surface water, the islands of the Atlantic and Indian Oceans have almost as much interest as our own. Wace (now at the Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University) and Holdgate (formerly of the Nature Conservancy, now Director of the Institute of Terrestrial Ecology, Natural Environment Research Council, London) are well equipped to write a multidisciplinary account of Tristan, Inaccessible, Nightingale, and Gough Island in the south Atlantic, having both taken part in expeditions to the group in 1955-6 and in 1968.

The present publication describes the scientific interest of the islands, summarises current knowledge, outlines the history of human occupation and use, analyses man's impact on the biota, and makes proposals for management and conservation. It ranks as part of the United Kingdom contribution to Project 7 of the UNESCO *Man and the Biosphere Programme*, on the ecology and rational use of island ecosystems. I found it fascinating reading, not only for the ornithology (which Holdgate described in earlier papers, 1960 and 1965) but for the history of occupation and exploitation, the varying fortunes of the islanders, the varying fates of endemic land birds and introduced mammals, some of which, surprisingly, were well established (goats, pigs) but later became extinct.

Tristan, like the Chatham Islands, lies close to the Subtropical Convergence, has a few tropical and many subantarctic seabirds, and its crayfish (or rock lobsters) now provide the most reliable source of income for the islanders. Uninhabited Gough Island 350 km to the SSE, has a high-latitude subantarctic avifauna, with *Pterodroma mollis*, *P. lugens*, *P. incerta* and *Adamastor* as well as convergence species like *Pachyptila vittata* and *Pterodroma macroptera*.

Among the guidelines set out for environmental management are proposals that meteorological recording at Tristan might be coupled with environmental monitoring for pollutants, and accommodation provided for visiting scientists. New Zealand may need comparable reports on her own outlying islands if the United Nations insist that the islands must be occupied before they can be used as a basis for drawing the boundary of a 200 mile economic zone. If New Zealand has to occupy Antipodes and reoccupy the Auckland Islands, there would be much merit in the occupiers combining the functions of fishery protection, wildlife ranging, environmental monitoring, meteorological observation and other scientific research.

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