

This book reviews the current literature on the evolution, ecology, and conservation biology of both New World vultures (Cathartidae) and Old World vultures (Accipitridae) and seeks answers to past and present regional extinctions, colonizations, and conservation issues concerning these species. Extinct species of both families of vultures are examined, as is the disputed evidence of familial similarities and differences currently under review by geneticists and ornithologists.

Vulture ecology and conservation are affected, positively and negatively by recent land cover changes (deforestation, urbanization and desertification), wildlife depletion, and pollution. Vultures may benefit from urban waste, more open forests, forest fires, landscape cultivation, road kills, and shore development. The positives for vulture ecology include, receiving increased attention, with recent studies of bird adaptation and "new" theories of adaptive management in conservation. These are counter-balanced with the negative impacts on vultures of recent ecological changes, such as wildlife depletion and pollution, and comparisons with the ecological needs of other raptors and scavengers. Vulture conservation is therefore increasingly complex, and must be understood within the fields of nature-society relations, more flexible paradigms of conservation and comparative ecology.

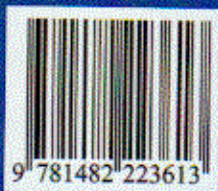
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