

## BOOK REVIEWS

**The Conservation Professional's Guide to Working With People.** Scott A. Bonar, 2007. Island Press, Washington DC. 198 pp. ISBN13 978-1-59726-148-7 (pbk), ISBN13 978-1-59726-147-0 (hbk). **Reviewed by Professor Elery Hamilton-Smith.**

I must start by emphasizing that the author assumes both conservation professionals and those with whom they work belong to a modernist (probably USA) English-speaking culture. Regrettably, as is the case with many writings on conservation, the crucial role of cross-cultural communication is almost totally neglected.

However, given this readership, it is a competent and intensely practical book. It strikes a fine balance and integration between the related themes of self-management and working effectively with colleagues.

It opens by emphasizing the importance of soundly based people skills and then turns to specific topics. These include conflict resolution, persuasion and leadership, customer service, negotiation, practical management, gaining a positive standing with colleagues and others, and protecting oneself against recalcitrant fellows.

Perhaps its best quality lies in the inherent assumption that good professional practice demands genuine accountability.

This is delightfully and clearly spelled out in the foreword from Duane Shroufe, Director of the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

I would recommend that the ideal time to read it would be within the early years of entry to professional practice.

**The Biology of Caves and other Subterranean Habitats.** Culver, David C. & Pipan, Tanja, 2009. Oxford University Press. ISBN 978 0 19 921993 3 (Pbk.) 254 pp. **Reviewed by Professor Elery Hamilton-Smith.**

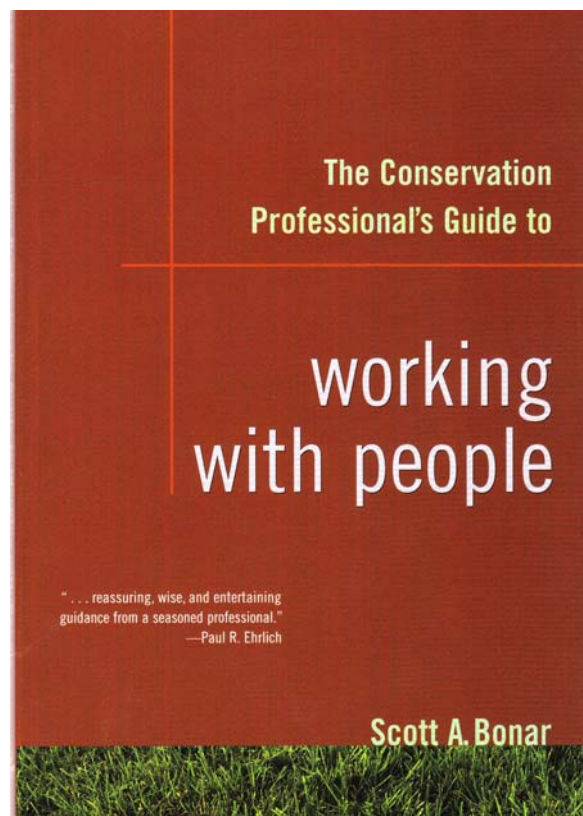
If we see the growth of scholarship in any field as a progressive climb up various series of stairs, occasionally a book appears which represents a new major terrace in our climb. This one brings together a new and wider integrated (holistic) field of study which genuinely considers the total subterranean environment rather than a primary focus upon caves.

The holistic perspective underlies this book and provides the context upon which the biological systems are studied. At the same time, another shift in context lies in the blooming of the new molecular taxonomy. So, this book certainly challenged its authors.

At the same time, other important contributions to the architecture of the new terrace include the 19th International Symposium of Subterranean Biology (in Fremantle 2008) with the collection of Australian background papers (Austin et al. 2008).

This collection provided a valuable in-depth example of the view from the terrace. But one of the other arrivals on the terrace is the enhanced conceptualization of hypogenic action in karst

Ideally, we might do well to return to it a few years later to review what we have learned and how effectively we apply that learning in practice.



(Klimchouk 2007). This clearly demands full recognition as an element within the holistic perspective.

One of the important steps in attaining the quality of this work lies in Tanya Pipan's 2005 paper on epikarst as habitat. She made a significant advance in our understanding of epikarst and thus opened a door to the current work.

Part of the current book's quality lies in its strategic structure. It commences with three chapters which provide an overview of the context:

- Describing the diversity of environments within the subterranean domain
- Examining the potential energy sources within the domain, given the absence of photosynthesis, and
- Providing an overview of the major inhabitants and the ways in which they have been categorized.

Then five chapters summarise the current understandings and continuing research questions:

- Definition and understanding of subterranean ecosystems
- Impacts of interactions within the ecosystem including competition and predation
- Evolution of the distinctive morphologies of subterranean species
- Exploring the evolutionary history of ecosystems and their relationship to major geological eras and events
- Examining the patterns of diversity across the world

Finally, some exemplary examples of subterranean communities are described as examples and the concluding chapter deals with protection and conservation.

All of this is done at a truly high level of both competence and clarity. It is a book to which we might well use the unusual term (in science) of wisdom.

It is worthy of attention by not only biologists, but anyone interested in understanding the subterranean domain. Inevitably, the authors have had to use a significant amount of professional terminology which will be unfamiliar to many readers but they provide a very excellent glossary.

Regrettably, the lead time involved in producing a book of this standing means that some related work that was in progress at the time could not be recognised and properly included in the book.

This includes the very great deal of work arising from the 2008 Subterranean Biology seminar and other research at the time, including the fundamental geological date of when oxygen first entered the atmosphere.

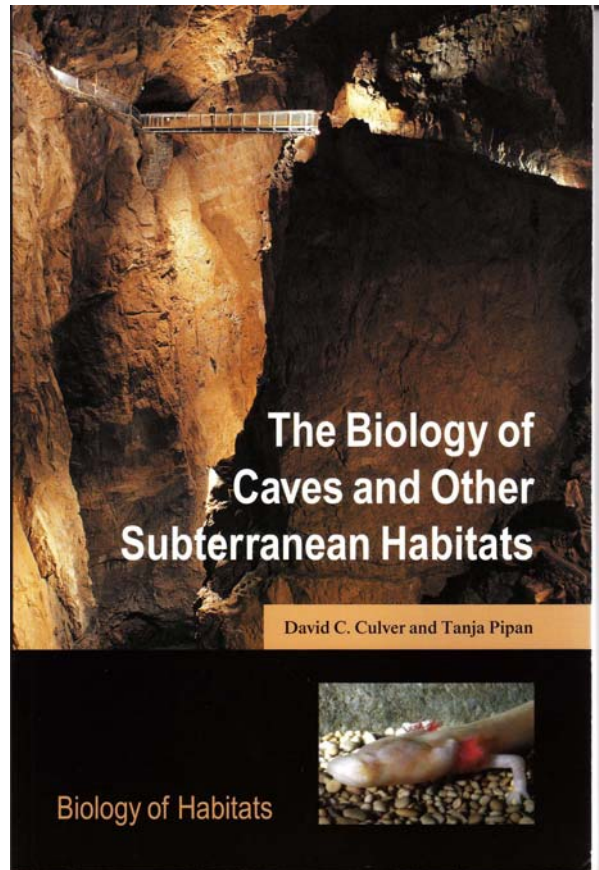
The wider implications of hypogenic effects are similarly given very little attention. The role of sulphur acids is certainly recognised, particularly where this is related to microbiotic processes, but generally the relationship of these with hypogenic processes is not properly examined.

So, it is a great view from the terrace at the very time when the terrace itself was under construction.

**Taking the Air: Ideas and Change in Canada's National Parks.** Kopas, Paul, 2007. University of British Columbia Press, Vancouver BC. 248 pp. ISBN 978-0-7748-1330-3 (Pbk) RRP \$32.95. ISBN 978-0-7748-1329-7 (Hbk) RRP \$85.00. **Reviewed by Professor Elerly Hamilton-Smith.**

Although structured within a historical sequence, this book is of immense value as it is not simply a history, but rather a systematic and critical analysis of public policy in relation to national parks. The historical dimension, as in most park services, is a story of attempts to adapt in response to the changes in the social and political context of a nation.

Kopas opens by summarising something of the early meanings and context of national parks and follows this with a largely historical overview. Then he moves to the core of the book, analysing four major phases in the development of parks



## REFERENCES

Austin, A.D., S.J.B. Cooper & W.F. Humphries (Eds.), 2008. Subterranean Connections: Biology and Evolutions in Troglolobiont and Groundwater Ecosystems. *Invertebrate Systematics*, 22(2): 85-310. [See also *19th International Symposium of Subterranean Biology 2008: Symposium Abstracts*, pp. 1-109]

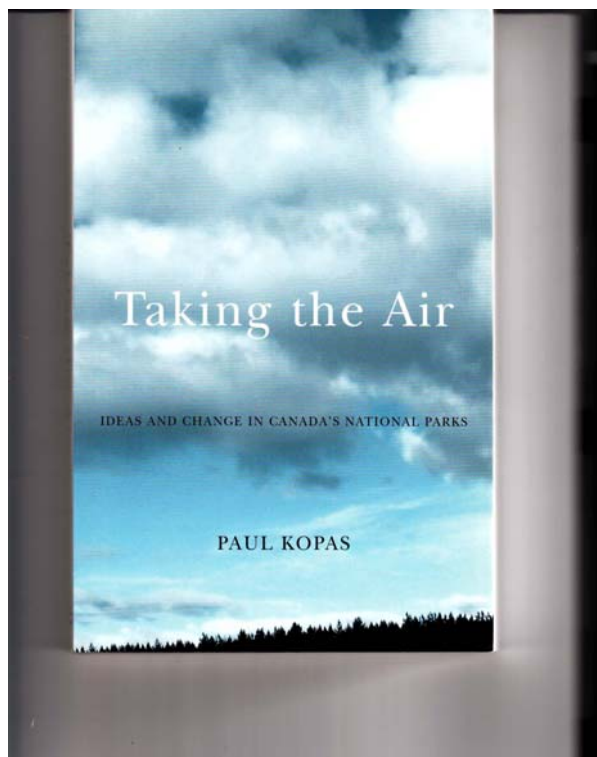
Klimchouk, A.B., 2007. *Hypogene Speleogenesis: Hydrogeological and Morphogenetic Perspective*. Special Paper no 1, National Cave and Karst Research Institute, Carlsbad, NM. 106pp.

Pipan, Tanya, 2005. *Epikarst – A Promising Habitat*. Ljubljana: ZRC Publishing, Karst Research Institute at ZRC SAZU, 101pp.

policy and finally summarises the meanings assigned to the Parks movement. When the first park was established in 1885, there was no awareness of the extent to which that represented the birth of a major movement. The first legislation was determined in 1930 and encapsulated the essential ambiguity of major parks, in that they are established to be utilised by present generations and simultaneously preserved unimpaired for future ones. In fact, this apparent contradiction is but one expression of the relationship; between people and the environment.

From this beginning, parks came to express five major meanings:

- As a symbol representing ideologies and values of the state and society. Initially, this was commonly expressed in terms of the equity of access to the parks by all people.
- As instruments of social and economic policy.
- As instruments of environmental policy, now being increasingly focussed upon sustainability of natural ecosystems.
- As 'human landscapes', replacing the original vision of landscapes without people, and looking towards direct respect for and appreciation of the park environment
- As a major resource in the protection of, and respect for, the beauty and wonder of the natural heritage, and again, looking towards an integration of natural and cultural values.



These multiple ideologies and meanings pointed to both the need for integrative policies and the complexity of the issues to be faced. These concerns were often stated as simple truisms, e.g. 'In nature you can never do only one thing' or 'You can never step twice into the same river'.

One specific and dominant historical characteristic of thinking about major parks in Canada was the extent to which they could serve the interests of economic expansionism. The railways thus became allies and supporters of the parks movement particularly in the immense land areas of Canada, the United States and Australia. But a countervailing Canadian force emerged in 1911 with the establishment of the Parks Branch under the leadership of J.B. Harkin and the continuing movement towards giving priority to preservation.

Although the National Parks Act legislation was proclaimed in 1930, much of it remained largely

neglected until the documented National Parks Policy Document of 1964. This was a flagship in the first period of evolution identified by Kopas as the Era of State Initiative (1955-70) with leadership of the parks movement and the initiative in policy development remaining in the hands of government and the bureaucracy.

The next developmental era saw a rapid increase in public participation (1970-1979). More than in many comparable countries, that period witnessed not only general public involvement but the extensive and proactive participation of Aboriginal Canadians. Parks were, of course, only one of many arenas in which public participation was a major issue.

We saw the US War on Poverty, accompanied by the black power movement, and the writings of radical visionaries such as Arnstein, Alinski, Illich and Postman. The flood of new ideas also led, of course, to Moynihan's *Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding!*

However, the world-wide social turbulence of this period was relatively well moderated in Canada where there was a long political tradition of openness and sharing in co-operative strategies for problem-solving.

The third era (1984-1993) saw the rise of highly organised interest groups generally expressed through NGOs and the resultant co-operative alliances to further the park movement at local and national levels.

This meant that Canadian Parks entered the fourth era with well-developed leadership and coherence, perhaps epitomised by the establishment of the Group of Eight as a major national forum.

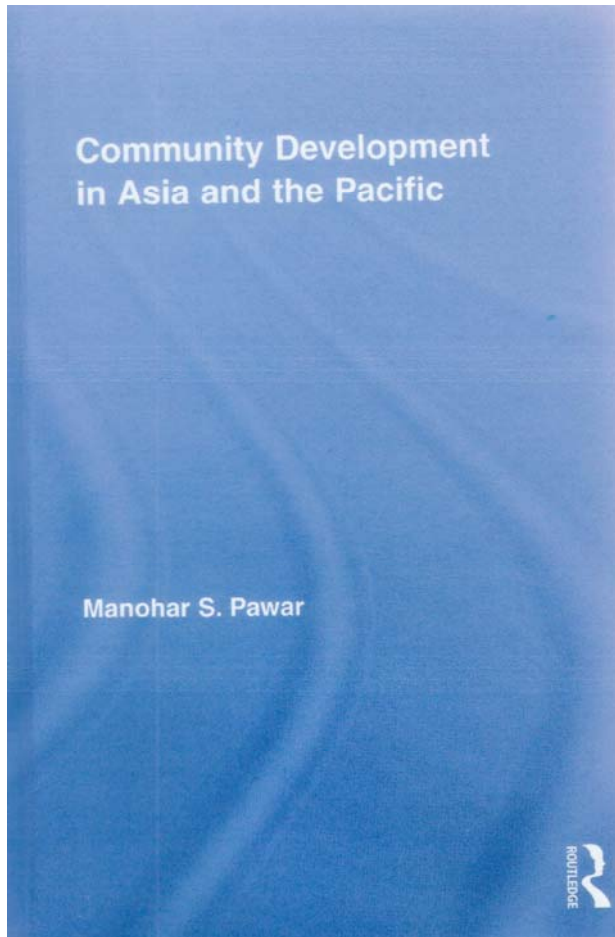
However, one of the strongest challenges to the parks movement came from the rise of the Neo-Liberalist Hegemony, recognised by Kopas as the 're-invention of government.'

However, the long and soundly-based development of co-operation and sharing in the governance of the parks movement saved Canada from the excesses of other countries, where governments made massive changes in governmental policies and fiscal arrangements, often in a relatively uni-lateral manner.

Terms like 'the new managerialism', 'economic fundamentalism' and 'risk management' became familiar and were applied to social institutions with little sensitivity to or understanding of the organisational damage being incurred. Kopas has certainly provided an excellent analysis of parks policy. I can only recommend it as invaluable reading for anyone concerned with future directions of the Parks Movement.

Even just to read the final evolution of parks summary is a masterpiece of compression which would convince many people that a thoroughly systematic and critical policy analysis is a fundamental tool in shaping the better governance of parks (or any other social movement).

**Community Development in Asia and the Pacific.** Pawar, Manohar S., 2010. Routledge, New York NY. 228 pp. ISBN10: 0-415-99874-3 (Hbk), ISBN10:0-203-86737-8 (ebk). **Reviewed by Professor Elery Hamilton-Smith.**



it is true to title and focused primarily upon Asian and Pacific societies, community workers in other regions would find it to be a valuable text.

The six chapter titles actually serve as an excellent overview of contents:

1. Diversity and Development in Asia and the Pacific
2. Community Development Practice Trends in Developed Countries
3. Community Development Practice Trends in Developing Countries
4. Values and Principles for Community Development
5. Practice Dimensions and Dynamics of Community Development
6. The Way Ahead: Challenges and Vision for Community Development

Although it is an extremely well-balanced and informative text, it is not dogmatic. The author demonstrates the value of caution in trying to interpret our practice experience and use that interpretation as a basis for arriving at general principles.

I have some forty years experience of both teaching and working with community development programs, and I have read it very thoroughly. The result is that I found no serious errors or other problems but I did find ideas that enriched and complemented my own work.

Books and reports on Community Development come to my attention frequently. In general, they are based upon a single project, or experience in only one cultural situation, and are largely descriptive reports with only a superficial discussion of their conceptual context.

Pawar's work is an exception. It ranges across the total Asian-Pacific region and draws upon literature from other countries. Further, it deals explicitly with conceptual issues. The result is that although

I have rarely reviewed any other community development writings as competent as this. I rarely find a professional text in which I cannot find faults or omissions.

I need say no more; in this post-modern world of excessive advertising, Pawar's book should be held up as a rare FIVE-STAR text.

