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## Frontiers of Biogeography

### Title

Books noted with interest

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## books noted with interest

**Biodiversity in Southern Africa****Vol. 1 Patterns at Local Scale – The BIOTA Observatories****Vol. 2 Patterns and Processes at Regional Scale****Vol. 3 Implications for Landuse and Management**

Norbert Jürgens, Ute Schmiedel &amp; M. Timm Hoffman (editors)

2010, Klaus Hess Publishers, 801 + 348 + 226 pp.

€75.00 (3-volume + CD-ROM set)

ISBN: 9783933117441

<http://www.k-hess-verlag.de>

Stunningly ambitious in scope, these volumes aim to inventory the biological diversity of Namibia and western South Africa. A decade-long project required the efforts of around 200 authors over more than 1,400 pages, leading to a combined series weight of 6.5 kg. Volume 1 introduces the standardised sampling methodology, followed by detailed reviews of each biome, peppered with illustrations, while biogeographers will be most interested in the integrative analyses in Volume 2. Sadly a comprehensive index is lacking. The CD appendix contains original data and complete species lists. In full colour throughout, at the price this represents a remarkable bargain.

**Methods in Forest Canopy Research**

Margaret D. Lowman, Timothy D. Schowalter &amp; Jerry F. Franklin

2012, University of California Press, 221 pp.

\$60.00 / £41.95 (hardback)

ISBN: 9780520273719

<http://www.ucpress.edu/>

Celebrating the work of ‘arbonauts’—intrepid explorers of the treetops—the authors provide a series of engaging vignettes covering multiple ways of studying forest canopies, and the reasons for doing so. Much more than the title suggests, this is a highly readable account of the frontiers of

biological discovery, ideal to inspire a new graduate student or provoke fresh ideas in a system you think you know well. If nothing else, it will make you look up at the trees with fresh wonder, into what E.O. Wilson dubbed the ‘Eighth Continent’. The authors maintain a related website<sup>1</sup>.

The Biodiversity Observation Network in the Asia-Pacific Region: Toward Further Development of Monitoring

Shin-ichi Nakano, Tetsukazu Yahara &amp; Tohru Nakashizuka

2012, Springer, 479 pp.

£135 (hardback), £108 (e-book)

ISBN: 9784431540328

<http://springer.com>

Recent political developments have inspired a more systematic approach to recording and monitoring biological diversity, with networks of scientists responding to the formation of the Inter-governmental Science–Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. This collection of reviews and short studies introduces such a regional initiative. The coverage is heterogeneous and inconsistent, with particular emphases on vegetation and freshwater fish, so it is likely that readers will prefer to select chapters of particular relevance. As suggested by the title, this represents a work in progress, and it is to be hoped that broader syntheses will become possible in the near future.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.canopymethods.com/>