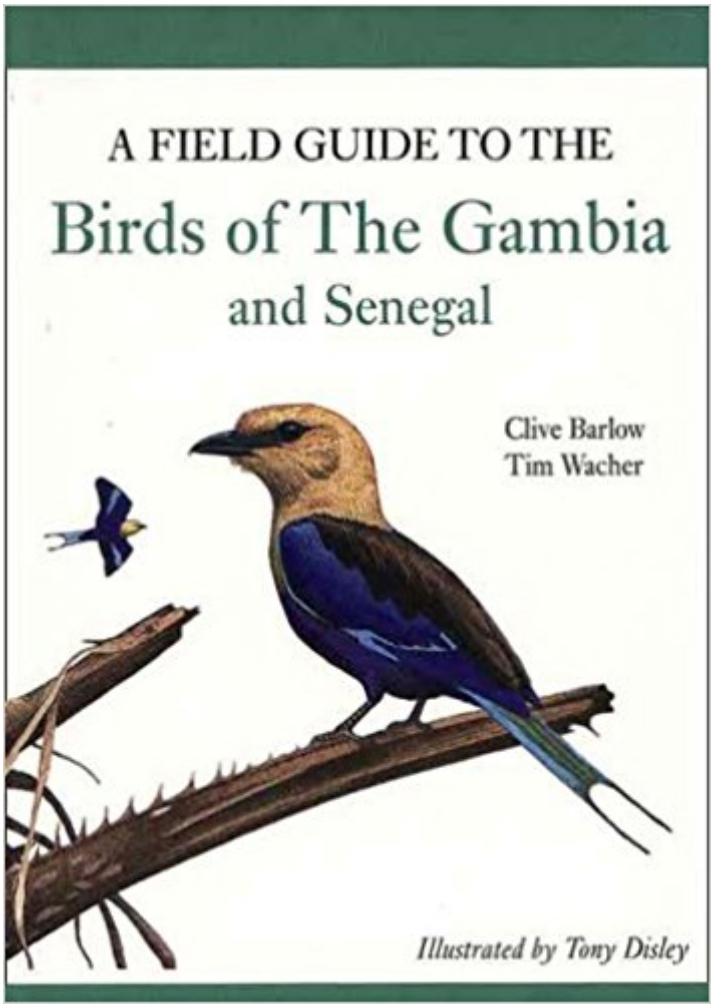
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A Field Guide To Birds Of The Gambia And Senegal



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Synopsis

This comprehensive book is the first field guide to the birds of The Gambia and Senegal, an area of West Africa popular with birders for its many tropical African birds. The guide provides full accounts of over 660 bird species and depicts nearly all of these in 48 beautiful color plates.Ã Â “A first-rate book that is a fine contribution to bird literature. For the birder who has everything, this makes a great gift.Ã¢â ¬Â•—Roy John, Canadian Field-Naturalist"A beautiful, succinct and very useful guide to the region's bird life."—Clay E. Corbin, Quarterly Review of Biology

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The Gambia is a popular tourist destination where many birders see their first tropical African birds. This small and accessible country shelters many migrants from the Western Palearctic from September to April, in addition to its resident West African birds. This is the first field guide to the birds of The Gambia, and it also covers the larger territory of Senegal, which almost entirely surrounds the country. The book's many features include: text covering every species on the Senegambian list - over 600 species in all; 48 Color plates depicting 570 species, including illustrations of virtually all birds of The Gambia and southern Senegal; and descriptions of species, which aid identification and provide information on habits, voice, status and distribution, and breeding.

Clive Barlow has lived in The Gambia since 1985, where he runs birdwatching safaris. Tim Wacher was resident in The Gambia for five years working as a mammalian ecologist. Tony Disley is a bird

artist based in Lancashire.

This field guide is very useful although it does not have distribution maps. The region covered is so small that most species may occur throughout it in appropriate habitat. There is a nice introduction which gives you an overview of habitats of the region. The birds are presented in 48 plates of similar or related species. This presentation is not overwhelming as there are usually a dozen or fewer species per plate. The very informative text, which pertains to each species, must be consulted after you have found the particular species of interest on a plate or by consulting the index, if you know the English or scientific name of the bird. The text suffers from being distanced from the picture of the bird but is well worth reading as it usually presents additional information pertaining to identification as well as details on habits, voice, status and distribution and breeding.

As an avid birder living in Senegal, I had seen a guide to birds of Senegal and Gambia in the hands of a local ornithologist and fell in love. Unfortunately I hadn't counted on there being two distinct Helm guides to birds of Senegal and Gambia. The Borrow and Demey guide is MUCH better - way more pictures, all species pictured (some are not pictured in this guide), three times as many color plates, and a great deal more pictures of females and immatures to assist with identification. Birds in this guide are crammed into only 48 plates and sometimes drawn somewhat amateurishly. I'll have to pawn this one off on an unsuspecting friend. :)

As far as I can tell, a nearly complete guide to the birds of Senegal. Using it I was able to identify most of the birds I photographed on a trip to Senegal, so for me it was great.It has color illustrations, descriptive text, and a comprehensive index.Users wishing a less expensive option should consider Birds of Western Africa: Second edition (Princeton Field Guides).

I live in Senegal and this is a fabulous book for someone who is living in Senegal or the Gambia. I travel some and have been using the Princeton Illustrated Checklist for Birds of Western & Central Africa - but it is nice to have a more limited list of birds that actually live here. (Makes it easier to identify them!) The illustrations are clear and I appreciated the raptors perched and in flight illustrations. What I also have enjoyed is the detailed info. about each bird in the back of the book - mating habits, flight patterns, breeding, etc. so that I really can learn more about the bird than just its name.

The format of this book is sub standard to the field guides we are used to in South Africa i.e. Newmans and Sasol.I could not review the layout of the pages prior to purchasing and was disappointed to find that the outdated plate system was used. Plate layouts work for leisure review but NOT a field guide where all info needs to be on the fingertips and distribution maps being one critical element.

The authors and illustrators do a wonderful job on a field guide of the birds of two countries that are not visited very often by birders. Clive Barlow lives in The Gambia and has been the moving force behind the creation of birding conservation efforts in that country. He is the acknowledged living expert of birds of Western Africa. He is also a first-rate field birder. Shortly after the book was published in 1998, my son and I had occasion to visit both Senegal and The Gambia. In Banjul we were most fortunate to meet Clive Barlow and go birding with him for four days. He is one of those rare individuals who has both wonderful identification skills combined with the uncanny ability to locate hard-to-find birds. His obvious love for birds is clearly evident in his handy field guide.The book is well organized and very tastefully presented. The illustrations are superbly drawn and handy maps let you see the bird’s expected range. Mr. Barlow is at his peak in the birds of The Gambia and only slightly less knowledgeable about Senegalese birding--perhaps because The Gambia is generally a much better place to observe birds.The book is one of my favorite field guides. It is, of course, a must for anyone birding in those two countries or neighboring regions. I wish every area of the world were covered by a guide of this quality. Its creators are to be commended for a very solid, readable, useful and enjoyable field guide.

I recently returned from one month in Mali, where I took the 1977 Collins guide to the birds of West Africa by Serle and Morel. That book could fit in my pocket, this book by Barlow is too wide.I am new to birdwatching and am used to the Peterson guides with big pictures and pointers to fieldmarks and many illustrations for each species . This book crams 20 or so birds on each page, and puts all the illustrations up at front. It does give a few examples of male/female/immature differences, and it does show raptors overhead. In this it is better than the Collins guide. The pictures seem cartoonish though.The text is quite helpful and I guess the names of the birds are more up to date. I did not buy this book because I was going to Mali, not Senegal or Gambia. But all of the 60 or so birds that I identified in Mali are also found in this book. The Collins guide did not give me enough help identifying the many small weavers I saw, so I used this Barlow book and my field notes when I returned to the US, and this Barlow book is clearly superior in this case at

least.The Collins book covers all the birds of West Africa, even though nearly half get less than 10 words and no picture. Still, it has to be my first choice for countries other than Gambia and Senegal, especially since it is more portable.

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