

## **Book Review – Wildlife Forensic Investigation**

Cooper, J.E. & Cooper, M. E.  
*Wildlife forensic investigation:  
principles and practice.*

742 pages, numerous colour and  
B&W photographs, tables, 11  
appendices, full bibliography, index.  
Oxford, Taylor & Francis Group.  
2013. Hardback, £82  
ISBN 978-1-4398-1374-4.

Wildlife crime is an increasingly  
serious issue for populations of both  
threatened and common species in  
many parts of the world.

In particular, the use of poisons  
and other toxic chemicals are one of  
the greatest threats to vultures in  
many parts of the world, especially in  
Africa.

Often, one of the key difficulties  
in prosecuting cases where the illegal  
use of chemicals has resulted in the  
death of wildlife is forensic evidence.  
For this reason in particular, but also  
for many others, the publication of  
this extensive book on forensic  
investigations of wildlife will be  
welcomed.

Between them, the principal  
authors have many years' experience

in veterinary medicine and  
international law, but also a strong  
inter-disciplinary approach. This is  
reflected in the list of 26 additional  
contributors that come from a wide-  
range of disciplines.

A strong emphasis on natural  
history and incorporating this into  
investigations resonates in the text,  
which this reviewer supports firmly.  
Good natural history observations are  
grounded in context but also,  
occasionally, instinct. It seems much  
the same way during forensic  
investigations, where the detailed  
recording of evidence is  
complemented by clues or  
information not easily revealed  
without context.

A highlight is the emphasis on  
data recording methods and protocols,  
with reference to case studies. The  
appendices provide a mass of  
additional and practical information.

The book is extensive and  
production quality is very high, which  
is reflected in the cover price.  
However, for a large number of  
researchers who might encounter  
wildlife crime, but especially  
government departments and  
investigators working in the field, this  
volume would be an important  
addition to their resources.

Campbell Murn

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