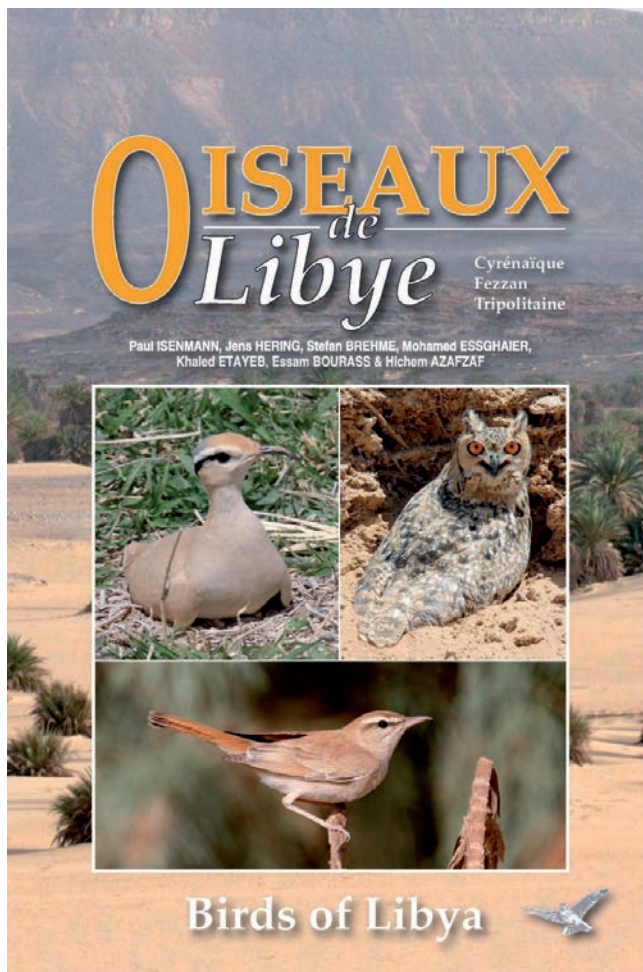


Book review



Birds of Libya / Oiseaux de Libye Paul Isenmann, Jens Hering, Stefan Brehme, Mohamed Essghaier, Khaled Etayeb, Essam Bourass, Hichem Azafzaf

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A bilingual, multi-authored book belonging to the series of annotated checklists that Paul Isenmann has been recently producing for several countries of NW Africa. A total of 351 bird species are presented and commented (status, phenology, habitat, nesting, ring recoveries), after a number of introductory chapters dealing with biogeography, conservation problems, etc. The text is beautifully accompanied by a large number of colour photos by Jens Hering.

The main merit of this new book is filling a gap in ornithological knowledge for a country that is (still) one of the least explored. Moreover, two previous Libyan

checklists (Toschi's and Bundy's, both outdated) had the unusual peculiarity of being complementary rather than integrated, like they relied on independent sources, with the result of offering both of them a partial picture. This problem is now over, and many new data have been added. Unfortunately, not for authors' fault, Libyan political situation since the Arab spring is not allowing to make full use of the information that has been gathered. Nevertheless, considering the role of Italian ornithologists in this country before the second world war, I can recommend this book, also for simply historical reasons.