

escaped over the dyke. At the south-western end of the dam is the former island of Wieringen and the Wieringermeer Polder of about 50,000 acres. This polder was reclaimed in 1930 but was flooded again in 1945 by the Germans. Immediately after the armistice the breach in the dyke was closed and pumping was started. Now, six years later, the land and buildings are restored and prosperous, a tribute to the determination and hard work of the Dutch people.

REVIEWS

Two reference books on nature protection. Edited and published by the International Union for the Protection of Nature, 42 Rue Montoyer, Brussels :—

PROCEEDINGS AND PAPERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL TECHNICAL CONFERENCE ON THE PROTECTION OF NATURE, LAKE SUCCESS, AUGUST, 1949. 195 Belgian francs, post free.

THE POSITION OF NATURE PROTECTION THROUGHOUT THE WORLD IN 1950. 220 Belgian francs, post free.

Neither of these books lends itself easily to review. The title of the first sounds fearsome but the book contains a most valuable collection of essays on nature conservation. For example :—

“Let’s Teach Water Conservation,” by O. E. Fink, Secretary, Friends of the Land, Columbus, U.S.A.

“Antyicide and African Game,” by Captain Keith Caldwell, late Game Warden, Uganda, and Assistant Game Warden, Kenya.

“The Great Indian Rhinoceros in Assam,” by Salim Ali, Honorary Secretary, Bombay Natural History Society.

“World Wide Education of the Public in the Protection of Nature,” by Iolo Williams.

The second book consists of reports from seventy countries on the state of nature preservation within their boundaries. Most of these reports are received from Nature Protection Societies, and being the result of a questionnaire sent out from I.U.P.N. they are conveniently similar in presentation. Soil, water, flora, fauna, minerals, reserves, education, and other matters being dealt with in turn.

There are some noticeable omissions, principally from East and Central Africa, but that is not the fault of the editors.

Both these books should be in the possession of all who wish to understand modern nature conservation and especially of those who cynically doubt the value of international effort. Payment can be arranged through purchasers' own banks.

C. L. B.

AN AMERICAN BIRD GUIDE

AUDUBON WATER BIRD GUIDE. By RICHARD H. POUGH. Illustrated by DON ECKELBERRY and EARL L. POOLE. 352 + xxviii pp. and 48 col. plates. Published by Doubleday and Co., Inc., New York. \$3.50.

My first reaction on seeing this Guide is that a comparable one covering the Birds of the British Isles in one or two volumes would fill a conspicuous gap in the ramifications of British ornithological literature. The *Handbook of British Birds* is a work for the library shelf and there are innumerable "pocket" volumes which are all insufficient in one or more respects; there is nothing like this. The Guide deals with the Water, Game, and Large Land Birds of Eastern and Central N. America from Texas to Central Greenland and is complementary to an earlier Guide which covered the Small Land Birds found in the same regions. It takes separate account of 258 species under five sub-headings: identification, habits, voice, nest, and range. In size and weight it is a little portly to be a true pocket book, but it is nevertheless eminently portable.

The author makes use of certain abbreviations, specially devised, but they do not obtrude themselves and the text matter is easy and pleasant to read. Compression has not been allowed to get the upper hand and as much space is devoted to two species which are now extinct as to living species. The aim has thus been to produce something more than a mere book on identification for use in the field, but less than a tome of technicalities for which the lay bird-watcher has little use. But identifying the birds they see is the prime difficulty of the audience to whom the Guide is addressed.

Small books and many large ones fail dismally to produce adequate coloured plates but Mr. Eckelberry has done this part of the book excellently. Each species is, broadly speaking, shown in as many different plumages as are requisite and it has therefore been necessary to include a number of birds on each plate. Despite the inevitable congestion the birds remain animated and life-like, and show sufficient detail to achieve this