

with concentration more on a man's work ; but the personal approach of this book is very effective.

Fraser Darling has neither written merely a traveller's tale nor a text book on conservation ; yet he has not fallen between the two. He has given us a very interesting travel story and told us enough about conservation to make us want to know what it really means and to try to discover how it can be brought about in face of our world's ever increasing population.

C. L. B.

WILD LIFE OF THE WORLD. Advisory Editor, Dr. MAURICE BURTON. Odham's Press, Ltd., London. 384 pp., over 200 illustrations. 13s. 6d.

A pretentious title indeed which requires explanation, for this handy, inexpensive volume is primarily concerned with mammals, to which ten of its fifteen chapters are devoted ; four of the others deal with birds ; and the last, intriguingly styled "Backwater of Evolution", touches briefly on reptiles and amphibians. Compiled under the expert guidance of Dr. Burton, who also contributes three of its chapters, one knows it is bound to be good. Other well-known zoologists and field naturalists are responsible for the remainder. It is written in simple language and the arrangement is sensible, while it will be as interesting and enjoyable to the general public as valuable to the student. But, one may well be excused for asking the question how yet another book on wild life is warranted when in recent years so many have been published. The answer is that this is something refreshingly new which graphically brings up-to-date our knowledge of mammals—and to a lesser extent of birds—for as in all fields of research much that is novel and strange is constantly being discovered. Constituting a veritable pocket encyclopedia, it is a fascinating compendium of the attributes and mode of life of the creatures with which it deals.

One must congratulate unreservedly all those who have participated in the production of so comprehensive a reference work, and one marvels at their skill in compressing so much valuable knowledge into such a limited space. The greatest difficulty must have been in deciding what to omit and there is little doubt that precious little which is pertinent or essential has been left out.

Eleven separate authorities are bound to differ considerably in style, yet an impressive standard of uniformity has been achieved. The main inconsistency is in the use of scientific names

and the somewhat haphazard way in which many have been omitted seems a pity, for instance we could have been told that the tree-shrews of S. E. Asia are known to science as *Tupaia*. Also, that obscene oddity the naked mole rat—expressively called *Heterocephalus glaber*—of Northern Kenya and adjacent arid regions might have been included. Other notable omissions are the fishing cat of Asia; the potto, a strange Tropical African lemuroid; Humboldt's woolly monkey of South America; and *Hypsignathus monstrosus*, the super-bat of the African equatorial forest region. The wombat of Australia is scarcely mentioned; the considerable population of the mountain gorilla, east of Lake Kivu has been overlooked.

The four chapters on birds have succeeded in presenting lucidly a splendid exposition on a vast and complex subject, but in the one on "Birds of Prey" there are some unfortunate inexactitudes. The harrier hawk, *Gymnogenys typicus* (now *Polyboroides typicus*) is widespread in Africa south of about latitude 15° North, and not as seems suggested restricted to South Africa. A printer's error makes *pyaneus* instead of *cyaneus* the specific name of the hen harrier; the bearded vulture, *Gypaetus barbatus* would appear by inference to be an Indian species, though it occurs in Europe and Africa and other parts of Asia; similarly, the African fish eagle (not really a sea eagle), *Cuncuma* (not now *Haliaetus*) *vocifer* is widespread through much of Africa, and is not confined to South Africa as might be inferred—its most remarkable characteristic is the unmistakable and resonant laughing cry. The description of the hunting technique of the crowned eagle, *Stephanoaetus coronatus* is imperfect, the method described being the one which is least commonly used.

Of an exceptionally high standard and cheap at the price, this is a volume which is indispensable to nature lovers and students.

C. R. S. P.

NO ROOM FOR WILD ANIMALS. By BERNHARD GRZIMEK.
Thames and Hudson, Ltd. 18s.

In his capacity as Director of the Frankfurt Zoo, Dr. Grzimek has made several expeditions to countries from which zoos draw many of their more spectacular exhibits. This book deals with a trip to the Belgian Congo to collect animals, even more to observe them for himself, but it also contains a powerful plea for the beasts that man is so rapidly exterminating or displacing.