

## Book reviews



A lava lizard from Santa Cruz, taken from page 135 of *Ship in the Wilderness* (Jim Snyder).

exercise in Arctic Norway. If the ability to paint convincingly subjects that are white is the sign of a skilful painter, then Shackleton is skilful indeed, for many of his subjects are white animals, such as snow petrels or polar bears, which live in the white environment of ice and snow. Aspiring wildlife artists should examine carefully how he tackles these difficult subjects.

Shackleton is a sailor, and the sea is an element for which he has a particular affinity. His ability to paint it is convincing enough on occasion to make the viewer feel slightly queasy. Sometimes these seascapes show seabirds as tiny shapes amid the waves and spray. These paintings epitomize the artist's enthusiasm for his subjects and his wish to share that enthusiasm with others. It is this that makes Shackleton's paintings wildlife art rather than wildlife illustration.

A similar element of enthusiasm is found in Jim Snyder's photographs in *Ship in the Wilderness*. Snyder with his co-author, Keith Shackleton, was one of the small elite team of naturalists who accompanied the voyages of *MS Lindblad*

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*Explorer* for 15 years from 1969. Although his photographs do include some full landscapes and seascapes, it is his animal photographs that I found exciting. Here is a photographer who views his subjects with the eye of an artist as well as a naturalist.

Both books are written by Keith Shackleton whose style is clear and enthusiastic. He is very self-effacing about his own paintings, claiming that he uses oils because the medium allows him to cover up his mistakes. The enthusiasm with which he writes about his subjects must have been an important part in the success of the Lindblad *Explorer* team and no doubt delighted the passengers. It would be easy to dismiss these passengers as rich Americans enjoying a trip into the wilderness, but that would be to underestimate the value that this sort of tourism can have for conservation. Many of these rich Americans were opinion-makers whose experiences of their Lindblad *Explorer* trips may have changed their view of conservation. These two books will give even more people a chance to share vicariously that experience, and they will certainly give pleasure to those of us who may never be able to make the voyage ourselves.

*Nicholas Hammond, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.*

### **Primate Ecology and Conservation**

Edited by J.G. Else and P.C. Lee  
Cambridge University Press, 1986, 393 pp, HB £37.50 (\$59.50), PB £12.50 (\$19.95)

The tenth biennial Congress of the International Primatological Society took place in Nairobi in July 1985. After a commendably short interval, editors James Else and Phyllis Lee have brought out a volume of 35 selected congress papers in what is Volume 2 of a series (Volume 1 is on primate evolution, while Volume 3 covers primate ontogeny cognition and social behaviour).

Unfortunately, however, many of the papers suffer from a lack of refereeing. Lindburg and his colleagues, for example, get started on a statistical analysis of primate breeding in zoos, but stop just when they should have been telling us what the numbers really mean in relation to sustaining zoo populations. Chivers gives a table of 'new and old

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sites of long-term studies of primate socio-ecology' that looks as though it was thrown together in a hurry and does not even include major sites that are mentioned elsewhere in the book. Strum gives a useful review of the Kenyan approach to primate conservation, but spoils it by emphasizing that the pragmatism she describes is unique and should be followed by other countries. I can immediately think of similar approaches in Cameroon, Indonesia and Malaysia, just to name three examples, as a basis for the more fruitful process of mutual learning. In these and quite a few other cases intelligent refereeing could have drawn the authors' attention to minor errors, relevant literature, and so on.

Nevertheless, there is a fair amount of wheat among the chaff. Zoo breeders will find useful the practical guidance in papers by Stevenson (on callitrichids) and Izard and Simons (on bush-babies), and the more ecological papers contain some first-rate work. Terborgh contributes to three intellectually stimulating papers on South American primates, and Harrison must be especially commended for applying elegant scientific methodology to a question about the diet of folivorous African monkeys. All in all, *Primate Ecology and Conservation* is probably a necessary purchase for any institutional primate library, with the sections on 'Primate-Human Conflict', 'Conservation: Trends and Practice' and 'Primate Conservation in the Broader Realm' being of most immediate relevance to conservationists.

Michael Kavanagh, *World Wildlife Fund-Malaysia*.

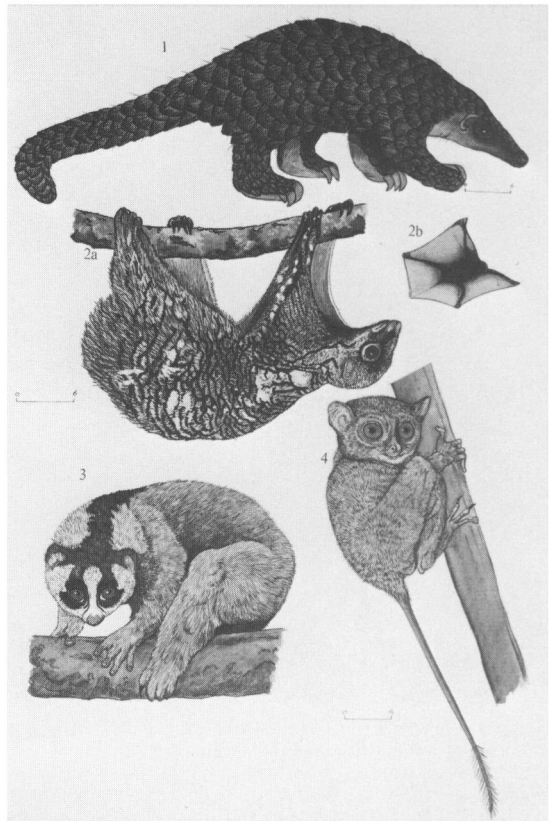
### Tropical Rain Forest in South-East Asia—A Pictorial Journey

Ken Rubeli

Tropical Press, 29 Jalan Riong, 59100 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1986, US \$32.00

'It can't be very often that a reviewer gets a chance to write, 'Hurry! Hurry! Buy now, while stocks last!', but this is certainly applicable to Ken Rubeli's beautiful book. Rubeli, an Australian, has been enlivening Malaysia's conservation community for over a decade now, and *Tropical Rain Forest in South-East Asia* is a distillation of what he has learned during that time. Unfortunately, only 2000 copies were printed and they are selling like hot cakes in Malaysia.

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A colour plate from *A Field Guide to the Mammals of Borneo* showing: 1. pangolin *Manis javanica*; 2. colugo or flying lemur *Cynocephalus variegatus*; 3. slow loris *Nycticebus coucang*; and 4. western tarsier *Tarsius bancanus*.

Rubeli clearly loves the forest, and he wants to share the object of his affections with the world. In words and pictures he explains not just the individual wonders, but the fascinating complexity of how the ecosystem fits together. He gives a superb introduction to the subject at a level that will appeal to experts as much as novices. The book comes not a day too soon: as Rubeli points out, South-East Asia's rainforest is already a 'half-eaten cake', and conservation priorities must be acted upon now to save what is left. Generating a widely held, positive appreciation of the forest in Malaysia and Indonesia must be one of those priorities, and to this Rubeli has undoubtedly made an important contribution.

Michael Kavanagh, *World Wildlife Fund—Malaysia*.

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