

who said that if a black panther could talk, he would talk like Bagheera?

But I mustn't quibble. It's a lovely collection; we shall all find gaps in it; we shall hope all the more for a companion volume soon.

JOHN MOORE

The Original Water-colour Paintings by John James Audubon for "The Birds of America". 2 vols. Michael Joseph, 25 gns.

Virtually the entire series of John James Audubon's unequalled paintings is reproduced in 431 plates in full colour with the accuracy and detail made possible by modern photographic techniques. A black and white reproduction of one plate, the California condor, is reproduced on Plate 16 opposite, by kind permission of the publishers.

Audubon was a pioneer of realism in the depiction of wildlife, and especially birds, and, as so rarely happens, the pioneer turned out to be a genius who has often been copied but never surpassed, or even equalled. We in Britain can be proud that when this great man was finding it hard to achieve recognition in his homeland, it was a visit to Britain and the helping hand of such far-sighted Englishmen as William Roscoe and the Rathbones of Liverpool who set him on the high road to material as well as artistic success.

I commend these two volumes to anybody wishing to make a very special gift to any ornithologist or bird-lover. It would be a splendidly appropriate retiring present, for instance, for someone who had given years of voluntary service in the natural history movement.

RICHARD FITTER

Men and Pandas, by Ramona and Desmond Morris.
Hutchinson, 50s.

Some popular animals, like horses and dogs, have had a long courtship period with mankind, allowing time to gain acceptance, but the speed with which the giant panda has captured the affection of man has, by comparison, been a shot-gun wedding. Less than a century ago in 1869, the intrepid missionary, Abbé Armand David discovered the giant panda and revealed it to western society, which had to wait a further 70 years to see a live one. The privilege went to Ruth Harkness, who stepped ashore in San Francisco on December 18th, 1936, with a 3 lb cub, and, with the now familiar incredulous publicity which attends all panda transactions, started the Panda Epoch. It is perhaps hard to realise that to this date only seventeen individual giant pandas have been seen outside China, and yet our society is littered with the trinketry of the Panda Cult.

Ramona and Desmond Morris have now collated the whole intriguing story of these endearing animals in a book which not only covers the known biology of the species, but also traces the career of individual animals which have made headlines over the past thirty years, such as Su Lin, Ming and Chi Chi. As the circumstances surrounding the capture of the first giant pandas in the mid-thirties were mysterious, so is their relationship to other

carnivores. Is the giant panda an overgrown, pied lesser panda or a bamboo-munching bear? There are essays on the lesser panda, and panda killers, and a thorough analysis of the features which make this rather dim-witted animal so appealing. The various appendices and a full bibliography make the book a valuable source of reference. It is a highly readable, often exciting work, illustrated and set out in a delightful way which more conservative publishers could do well to emulate. There is one serious omission, however, which the book itself may well help to fill; let us hope that a future edition may include a chapter on field work.

JOHN SPARKS

Mammals of the Pacific States, by **Lloyd G. Ingles**. Stanford University Press and O.U.P., 80s.

The first edition of this book was modestly confined to California; the second included the coastal waters and therefore a most interesting section on the whales; the third has reached farther afield to cover Oregon and Washington as well, so that the status of mammals in the important regions of the Cascades and the Olympic Peninsula is described. Though this work is so regional in its title and described as being for students and beginners in mammalogy, let no one be so mistaken as to pass it by lightly. It is a scholarly book of painstaking accuracy most serviceably illustrated. The valuable keys and descriptions are terse, as they should be, but the text is refreshingly interesting, so much so that many Old World students of mammals will be glad to have the book.

Anyone sensitive to the romance of the interlocked histories of men and other mammals will find several examples here. History is not all tragedy: Steller's sealion can still be seen by ordinary folk near San Francisco and at Monterey; and it is quite wonderful at that beautiful and thrilling Monterey Point to watch a sea otter lying on its back in the surf, after a period when we had thought it extinct. Further, there is the story of the grey whale, also thought to be extinct in American waters, which turned up again in Scammon's Bay, the place where that cunning old whaling captain had found it (and exploited it) a century ago. The gentle and playful behaviour of grey whale cows and their calves can be observed from the air, for the animals lie near the surface of the water.

Lloyd Ingles sees mammals in their total environment, physical and behavioural, and because of this deplores the training of students in depth before they have become educated in and aware of breadth. Members of this Society will so warmly agree with him.

F. FRASER DARLING

The Terrestrial Mammals of Western Europe, by **G. B. Corbet**. Foulis, 56s.

If national boundaries stand firm politically, they are, zoologically at least, now tending to vanish, especially as travel is so much easier to many parts of the world. Naturalists have been quick to take advantage of this and so there has been a need for a handbook such as this for a good many years. Up to date the only publication fulfilling the need has been the field guide by van den Brink, which has excellent illustrations but has not yet appeared in an English version.

But Dr Corbet's book, which covers European mammals west of Russia with the exception of bats, seals and whales, is a good deal more than a