

peninsula, and illustrates 114 of them in colour; it is the first such account not only for Malaya, but anywhere in the Oriental Region, with the possible exception of the same author's *Mammals of Borneo* (which lacks colour plates). Since many of the species involved extend far beyond the boundaries of Malaya, from India and southern China to Java and Borneo, its field of usefulness is extensive. An introductory chapter clearly describes the protection legislation, but few clues are provided about the prospects for the few seriously threatened species such as the Sumatran rhino and the tapir. One species, the Javan rhino, is already extinct on the mainland. The rain-forest habitat is reflected in an astonishing diversity of bats, with 81 species already recorded and additions being made annually, and of squirrels, with 25 species. Considering the small size of the country, comparable to England, this is an astonishing fauna, dangerously dependent upon the survival of forest.

In Hawaii the sole and endemic bat has been joined by nineteen other terrestrial mammals ranging from feral domestic stock (e.g. about 2000 head of feral cattle) to uninvited rats and deliberately introduced mongooses and game ungulates. Mouflon, pronghorn, mule deer and axis deer have all been recently introduced for hunting, and apparently further candidates are being considered. Protesting voices are numerous but ineffective. In an island where the ancient inhabitants used miniature bows and arrows for sport shooting of the Polynesian rat anything seems possible!

Dr Tomich has produced a detailed, almost pedantic, account of the successful and unsuccessful introductions of terrestrial mammals; he has briefer accounts of the marine species, one of which, the endemic monk seal, provides a happier story. After being close to extinction at the beginning of the century, the numbers today are over a thousand.

G. B. CORBET

A Field Guide to the Larger Mammals of Africa, by Jean Dorst and Pierre Dandelot. Collins, 50s.

The latest of the well known Collins' Field Guide series fulfils its purpose admirably. Though dealing principally with the ungulates, Carnivora and primates, it also considers the pangolins, aardvark, manatee and several small mammals such as squirrels and elephant shrews—in fact all those likely to be encountered in Africa by anyone other than a specialist. Identification, habitat, habits, similar species, and where necessary intraspecific variation are discussed; English and scientific names are supplemented by names in French, German, Afrikaans and Swahili.

Despite the authors' disclaimer that the book is not concerned with systematics, they have tried to keep up with current trends in classification, and draw attention to cases where two forms regarded by other authors as conspecific have been treated by them as separate species, which is most useful for the general reader. The range maps, though small, come out very well, and within their declared limitation give a good idea of distribution. It is particularly gratifying to see the break in distribution between south-western and eastern Africa shown for such species as the spring hare, bat-eared fox and the oryxes, *Oryx gazella* and *O. beisa*, which the authors regard as separate species, rather than the continuous range so often, erroneously, indicated. On page 102 the authors state that young wild dogs follow their mother after one week. This is surely wrong—they would not have opened their eyes; three months or so is more likely.

The colour illustrations, comprising 44 plates depicting virtually every

species mentioned, in the best collection of its sort I have seen. M. Dandelot has the gift of portraying the authentic facial expression, which makes his animals live. Even the mongooses (surely the acid test) look like mongooses, and the Felidae are superb. Though correctly described in the text, both the steenbok and Sharpe's grysbok are depicted with false hooves, an unfortunate slip.

This excellent book can be recommended to everyone with an interest in African mammals, professional as well as amateur.

W. F. R. ANSELL

Australia's National Parks, by Vincent Serventy. Angus and Robertson, 85s.

In *A Continent in Danger*, published in 1966, Vincent Serventy warned that many of Australia's unique plants and animals might be threatened with extinction, and in this latest work he repeats his warning. But he also gives a cheering account of the progress made in the conservation of at least a representative series of habitats, with their natural plant and animal communities, in parks and reserves 'where all things of nature are protected'. Royal National Park, near Sydney, the first national park in Australia, and the second in the world, was established in 1879. 'Today there are many national parks and reserves throughout the country—and more are being declared each year'. Of these he has selected 181 to give an overall picture of Australia's native flora and fauna. The descriptions, done with admirable clarity and interest, bring out each reserve's special aspect or task, and the text is interwoven with magnificent illustrations: 32 full-page colour photographs, 64 pages of black and white.

Some Australian parks and reserves are very large. The South-west National Park in Tasmania, for example, embraces approximately 1,600,000 acres. The conservationist might prefer to have a much smaller area with more assurance about the plans for its long-term maintenance; management, a matter to which Serventy makes little reference, may be essential to achieve the 'special task' of a reserve. Even in Australia, because 'each year millions of acres of bushland are destroyed . . . marshes are drained . . . rivers are dammed', the largest reserves may prove ecologically unstable and subject to dynamic change if left to themselves.

This account of Australian flora and fauna, and their natural habitats, is a valuable contribution to the conservation literature; it is no less enjoyable reading—and viewing—for any reader with an interest in a lovely country. Whether one has had the good fortune to have seen some of these unique plants and animals amid their native scenery, or whether the book itself introduces them for the first time, the interest and pleasure it will give can be assured.

JOHN BERRY

Since Silent Spring, by Frank Graham Jnr. Hamish Hamilton, 40s.

Silent Spring was a skilful advocacy of the case that the indiscriminate use of pesticides has had undesirable and damaging effects on organisms other than target species. Mr Graham begins with an interesting biographical sketch of the late Rachel Carson, and gives the background to her book which so severely rocked the agro-chemical boat. His own book follows in the same vein, and again deals largely with the situation in the United States, but includes relevant details drawn from other countries. The more recent scientific evidence supporting Miss Carson's case is marshalled, and in particular that showing the harmful effects of persistent organochlorine compounds on the populations and reproductive biology