

Book reviews

Non-Infectious Diseases of Wildlife
Edited by Gerald L. Hoff and John W. Davis
Iowa State University Press, 1982,
£22.00

The book is a most worthy addition to the three volumes that have already been printed in this series on diseases of wild animals. It has been well edited with generally short, compact chapters which are clearly laid out under distinct headings, making the retrieval of information for anyone in a hurry much easier. As usual with this publisher the paper quality and standard of binding are excellent.

The book covers a wide range of somewhat unrelated subjects except that they deal with many of those causes of disease which are not produced by a living agent. Some of the chapters are real gems, particularly those on 'Shock' and 'Poisonous Plants'. That on shock is one of the best descriptions of this difficult subject that has been published. These two contrast strongly with a rather vague introductory chapter on 'General Toxicology' and the woolly and somewhat inaccurate chapter on 'Stress and Diseases of the Cardiovascular System'.

There are three excellent chapters at the end of the book on nutritional diseases of birds, mammals and reptiles. That on mammals is a particularly comprehensive review of the subject and deals with each of the main orders in turn. These three chapters cover the problems arising from nutritional deficiency very well, but they do not cover the increasing problem of overfeeding and its pathological effects. The middle of the book contains a number of short chapters on more specific topics such as Capture Myopathy, Amyloidosis and the less widely seen 'Soyabean Impaction in Waterfowl'. The book is illustrated with a number of black and white photographs, but the quality of many of these is such that they do not really add to the text. It is a pity that the date of the last reference included is 1978 suggesting that the volume took a long time coming to press.

Nevertheless, these are small points compared to the overall impression the book gives which is very favourable. It will be indispensable to vet-

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erinarians and wildlife managers and, like its companion volumes, become the standard reference for its subject.

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Owls of Europe
Heimo Mikkola
T. and A.D. Poyser, 1983, £16.80

The last decade has seen a tremendous increase in the volume of literature concerning owls and this present volume not only fills a niche but is written with exceptional clarity. In addition to detailed species accounts, there are some excellent chapters dealing with 'Relationship of European Owls with their Prey', 'Ecological Isolation', and 'Conservation and Legal Status of the European Owls with their Prey', 'Ecological Isolation', and a cinating diagram of the 'interspecific pecking



Threat posture of great grey owl—wings are dropped and bill is snapped—such behaviour often precedes flying attack on intruder (from *Owls of Europe*).

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