

Animals of Europe: the ecology of the wildlife, by Maurice Burton, Peter Lowe, £3.25.

This useful survey of the European fauna, present and past, deals in turn with the natural regions of this corner of the Afro-Eurasian land mass: the tundra of the far north; the taiga, or northern belt of coniferous forests; the broad-leaved central forest area; the Mediterranean; and finally the Russian steppes.

The almost total absence of desert areas has meant that more of the land has been occupied by man than in other continents; the consequent destruction of natural habitats together with active persecution have driven the larger animals to their last strongholds in mountain, marsh and forest. Accounts are given of the characteristic fauna of each zone, including Arctic fox and hare, lemming and ptarmigan of the tundra; reindeer, lynx, wolverine, glutton and capercaillie (which, surprisingly is omitted from the index) of the taiga; and brown bear, bison, deer and abundant woodland birds of the deciduous forests. The treatment throughout is ecological rather than systematic, and man's influence as farmer, forester and, later, industrialist is emphasised.

The present-day status of the wolf in Europe is put forward as an example of a species under intense persecution—presumably the statement that the last wolf in Ireland was killed in the 1960s is a misprint. The Mediterranean zone, however, is presented as the classic example of habitat spoliation that had dramatic effects on the fauna: 'From this early Arcadia it has become the most ravaged, biologically, of all Europe'.

The survey ends with a section on invaders and aliens which includes much interesting and up-to-date information on species such as muskrat, coypu, American mink and collared dove. There is a select bibliography and a useful glossary.

The clear and very readable text, which is illustrated throughout by well-chosen and excellently reproduced colour photographs, is well within the capacity of the general reader and an intelligent youngster. The book would be a valuable addition to any school library.

JOHN CLEGG

The World's Cats Vol. 1. Ecology and Conservation; Vol. 2 Biology, Behaviour and Management of Reproduction, edited by R. L. Eaton. World Wildlife Safari, Winston, Oregon \$10 and \$12.50.

The two paper-back volumes each report an international symposium on cats, held in 1971 and 1973. The first included nine papers on cat species, some with good data from research, notably on North American lynx and bobcat and Indian lions and leopards. The North American studies emphasise radio-tracking techniques (but with no discussion of the possible effects of the radios on behaviour), whereas the Old World studies depended on direct observation. Five papers on management include a short but useful account of principles for pharmacological restraint, and 46 pages about captive cheetahs in western USA, where no fewer than 34 were imported in May 1970. These lengthy papers attempt to make some scientific use of this extraordinary (and, one hopes, unique) import. One litter was born in the first year and one cub survived, and only three more litters are reported in vol. 2; FPS members will hope that the research yields some more practical results for managing captive cheetahs. The final section, on recommendations for conservation, consists mainly of accounts of the status of leopard, jaguar and ocelot, and recommendations for stopping the fur trade.