tropic regions. These strategies could, if implemented, have far-reaching effects, not only for parrots, but for the survival of many other species.

It is usually invidious to pick out particular papers, but Robert Ridgeley's 151 pages on the current distribution and status of mainland neotropical parrots is a most important document. It is based on data gathered over six years, including an immense amount of field work. He summarizes for each species information on range, habitat and status. His conclusions are sane, liberal and practical, and should be read by all those concerned with parrot conservation.

There are a number of relatively minor criticisms: the next meeting of the group is to be in 1984 not 1974, p xiii; Scott or Scoot? pp 397, 400; references in text but not listed, or vice versa, e.g. pp 171, 198. I am not sure of the relevance of a paper on feeding apparatus, or on a captive-bred *Amazona* hybrid and its offspring, within the general theme of the book. A major fault is the lack of an index.

Overall though this is an admirable and timely book, and ICBP are to be congratulated on making it their first technical publication. It is a really excellent harbinger of what I hope will be a long and useful series.

P.J.S. OLNEY

Available from Roger Pasquier, ICBP President's Office (Room MNH-336), Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC 20560, USA.

**Wildlife and Nature Photography**, by **Michael Freeman**. Croom Helm. London, £13.95.

At first glance this seems just another book on wildlife photography although a little more lavish than most. Closer inspection reveals it is much more than that. The book is divided into seven sections. The first, a short introduction, is followed by a concise yet thorough description of types of equipment with useful and constructive charts showing suitability for various subjects. This is followed by an excellent section on fieldwork describing stalking, types and the construction of hides, and close-up techniques. This particular section is very thorough and contains a host of sensible hints and tips of how to get the best when photographing wildlife, with a particular emphasis on the need for understanding and care. The next two sections could conceivably have been put together as one, dealing as they do with the environment and special locations. These primarily deal with technique, specialized equipment, and how to care for it whilst on location. The penultimate section is on studio photography. Again this is particularly thorough and extremely useful – an area of natural history photography not often covered in books of this type. The last section is a brief gazetteer, giving a small list of places known for their wealth of photographic opportunities. Full of good quality colour and black and white photographs, supplemented by sensible, and I thought, particularly instructive black and white line drawings. One of the best books on this subject I have seen.

TIM PARMENTER

**Seaweeds and their Uses**, by **U.J. and D.J. Chapman**. Chapman and Hall, London and New York, £17.50.

To most people the study of seaweeds (marine algae) is a relatively esoteric subject with little significance to the world at large. When I answer this by pointing out that every day, every person in the British Isles uses a substance or product derived from seaweed, there is considerable surprise. Casual perusal of this book will confirm this.

In this revised and updated (3rd edition) the Chapmans provide a collation and synthesis of the large amounts of published information on the commercial exploitation of seaweed resources, with much new information; clearly considerable effort has been put into scanning and abstracting the wide range of available literature.

Their nine chapters cover the historical aspects of seaweed use and its current use as manure, fodder and food for man. The laver and caragheen moss, alginate and agar industries are outlined. Also dealt with are mariculture, the available algal resources and their potential for future exploitation.

The chapters are brief and readable. Several of the diagrams were used in the first edition and a few are easily recognized by the use of old nomenclature which should have been revised. Overall the illustrations vary in standard from average to good.

There are good plant-name and subject indexes. The bibliography is extensive but not complete, for reasons of space; it is always regrettable when titles are not included in the references, but presumably, again, space was limited.

The book is a must for university, museum and public library shelves, but its price puts it out of the reach of students and laymen. A cheaper paper-back version would have been worthwhile.

IAN TITTLEY

**The Life of the Meadow Brown**, by **W.H. Dowdeswell**. Heinemann Education Books, £5.95 (paperback).

This is a fascinating book about one of the most familiar butterflies in Britain. Unlike most recent books on butterflies, it is packed with information that is refreshingly new, at least to anyone unfamiliar with the scientific papers written by Professors Dowdeswell, E.B. Ford and colleagues during the past 40 years. But readers should be wary of the title. This is a popular account of some classic studies on the ecological genetics of the Meadow Brown. It is not a full account of its behaviour or of the various hazards that face the eggs, caterpillars, and pupae in the wild, or of how some individuals survive these. Some aspects of ecology and behaviour are touched upon, but mainly from the viewpoint of their importance to the ecological genetics of this butterfly. I found these passages tantalisingly short.

There are two themes to this book. One is a description of the great variation that can occur in the markings of this butterfly between different (often nearby) populations, and how and why this might have arisen. The other is how these discoveries were made: how one find led to another line of enquiry, and how these were influenced by the techniques and resources that were available at the time. This partly historical approach (with a few anecdotes) makes this a highly readable book. But it is, in any case, well and clearly written, as we have come to expect of the author. The reader is led from one discovery to the next, helped by 29 clear figures, 27 tables, and 18 black and white plates.

The first chapter introduces the reader to the Meadow Brown and the second describes how the initial discoveries of variation between populations were made. Chapters 3, 4 and 5 describe the differences respectively found in colonies in mainland Britain, Europe, and the Scillies. The significance of these discoveries (so far as is known) is discussed in Chapter 6, whilst the final chapter gives many avenues of research that have been thrown up for the future. Altogether, this is an absorbing book that I recommend to both the layman and the scientist. It is also good value at £5.95.

JEREMY THOMAS