

Book reviews

treaties that affect wildlife, with the exception of those concerned with fish involved in commercial fisheries. The author justifies the exclusion on the grounds that they are already covered in other reviews. However, I would have welcomed an outline summary by Simon Lyster, since the other reviews do not treat fish as wildlife, but as fisheries; the book I use for reference, *International Regulation of Marine Fisheries*, by Albert W. Koers, is an almost impenetrable labyrinth.

The layout is exemplary. At a glance, it is possible to find out not only what each Convention does, but also what it does not do. Furthermore, Lyster is careful to describe contentious points of interpretation. The book is divided into four main parts. Part I describes 'Basic Principles of International Wildlife Law', Part II covers Whales; Seals and Polar Bears; Birds and Vicuna, Parts III and IV deal with the major Conventions, including the African Convention, Berne, Ramsar, and CITES. Finally, an Appendix gives the texts of 12 of the most important and current Conventions. This alone makes the book remarkable value as the texts are often expensive when purchased from Government printing offices and often very difficult to obtain.

My only criticism is very minor: the historical background to each subject is necessarily brief and the truncated history might be misleading. In the history of CITES, the author cites the earliest demand for wildlife trade controls as being made in 1911, but the African Convention, described earlier in the book, which controlled the trade in ivory and some other wildlife products, antedates this. The earliest demands for international controls on wildlife trade in fact date back to the 1870s when vast numbers of tropical birds began to be imported for the millinery trade. The early campaigns against the plumage trade led to the formation in the 1880s of both the RSPB and the Audubon Society, and through their various campaigns and legislation evolved CITES and the modern conservation movement.

However, this is a nit-picking criticism in a book that will undoubtedly become a standard reference in the library of any conservationist and should run through many editions. Hopefully, the publishers will keep it in print and revise it regularly to keep up with changes in the major Conventions.

John A. Burton

Insect Conservation—An Australian Perspective

T.R. New

Dr W. Junk, Dordrecht, Netherlands, 1984, HB £27.95

The subject matter of this book is rather more international than one might suppose from the title. The author draws heavily on European and North American research and case-histories to make his own argument for protecting Australia's extraordinarily rich and fascinating insect fauna. Because of the lack of experience in conserving Australia's insects, there are new fears that many species will become extinct in the near future through human agencies—mainly habitat destruction. A high proportion of these are likely to be undescribed.

Threatened species have already been recognized in all the major insect orders, including mayflies on Mt Kosciusko, the relic damselfly *Hemiphysalia mirabilis* in Victoria (recently re-discovered), and stoneflies on the Otway Ranges and Mt Donna Buang. Australia has some extraordinary species in the Orthoptera (grasshoppers and relatives). The Cooloola monster, a heavy subterranean insect with powerful digging legs, has a very restricted range. For some species it may be too late—the Lord Howe Island stick insect, once believed to survive on a small rock outcrop near Lord Howe, is now almost certainly extinct.

The author calls for a number of actions to further the conservation of Australian insects. These include a broad educational programme, aimed particularly at politicians and other decision-makers; more attention to habitat destruction and pollution; listing of threatened species; continuing progress towards adequate habitat representation, with much more use being made of insects in identifying such sites; increased funding for taxonomic work, and field guides and more autecological studies. Emphasis is placed on the need to recognize that listing species as 'protected' is not alone sufficient for conservation.

Sadly, the book's high price but modest design (printed from camera-ready copy) will probably

Book reviews

prevent it reaching the bookshelves of many entomologists. It deserves a much wider audience, for New's thoughtful work not only points the way ahead for Australians, but provides a very valuable summary for conservationists in the northern hemisphere too.

N. Mark Collins, IUCN Conservation Monitoring Centre

The Amazing Armadillo

L.L. Smith and R.W. Doughty

University of Texas Press, Austin, Texas, 1984, HB \$13.95, PB \$6.95

I first came across the armadillo in the delightful Kipling story of childhood. Since then, I have learned all too little about the creature. Hardly anybody writes about its natural history, its ecology or behaviour, its conservation status, whatever. There have been a few notes about its use as a research model for leprosy, and that is about all. All the more welcome, then, is this account of the nine-banded armadillo in the southern US. After reaching northwards from Mexico about 150 years ago, the armadillo has actually extended its range hundreds of miles across southern and south-eastern US—a rare ecological success story.

The book not only deals with the basic biology of the animal and its spreading distribution, it also examines recent popular interest in the armadillo as a symbol of popular culture. The creature certainly seems to have ingratiated itself into the folklore of Texas and several other states—and this additional dimension is splendidly treated by the two authors, being geographers at the University of Texas. Equally to the point, the authors write not only with scientific substance, but also with an engaging style. Altogether, this is a worthy publication, even if rather expensive in hardback form.

Dr Norman Myers, Consultant in Environment and Development

The Wild Sheep of the World

Paul Valdez

Wild Sheep and Goat International, Mesilla, New Mexico, \$40

As was the case with most ungulates, the early literature on wild sheep saw them primarily as hunting trophies, with all the emphasis on bigger

58

and better 'heads'. In recent years, there has been a resurgence of interest, especially from the point of view of social organization and behaviour, with the pioneering field work of Geist in North America and Schaller in the Himalayas, demonstrating, amongst other things, the functional significance of bigger and better heads. A further recent development has been the elucidation of the otherwise intractable problem of delimiting the species, using evidence from chromosomes. The time would therefore seem ripe for a world-wide review of the group to bring together all this diverse and scattered information.

Disappointingly, this volume only goes a small way towards fulfilling this. The classification is indeed brought up to date, although somewhat marred by the frequent use of the cumbersome and quite unnecessary terms 'moufloniforms', 'argaliforms' and 'pachyceriforms' for the three groups (particularly redundant in view of the fact that the first two are, in the classification used, synonymous with the single species *Ovis orientalis* and *O. ammon*).

Brief introductory chapters on the discovery of wild sheep, their life-history and habitats are followed by two- or three-page accounts of each subspecies, with descriptions mostly quoted verbatim from early sources. A final chapter, by J.H. Batten, extols the delights of sheep hunting in terms that will seem strangely archaic to most readers. Both hunters and conservationists will be disappointed that the range of each form is only given briefly as the maximum historical range, with no information on current status nor on the problems of conservation and management.

This then is a handbook that will appeal mainly to the hopefully dwindling band of sheep hunters rather than to the increasing ranks of wildlife watchers.

G.B. Corbet, British Museum (Natural History)

A Dictionary of Animal Names in Five Languages—Mammals

V.E. Sokolov

Moscow: 'Russkiy yazyk', 1984, 3.30 rubles.

Obtainable from Collet's, Dennington Estate, Wellingborough, Northants NN8 2QT, UK, £5.75

Other multilingual dictionaries of animal names

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