

My only sorrow is that, having mentioned the characters necessary to identify the animal, there is no attempt to describe the appearance of the animals or to give as a regular feature simple information like head and body lengths, a knowledge of which would reassure the diffident field worker that his identification by key is probably correct.

MICHAEL BRAMBELL

Joy Adamson's Africa, by **Joy Adamson**. Collins, £4.25.
Africa—Hunters and the Hunted of the Savannah, by **Felix Rodriguez de la Fuente**, translated by John Gilbert. Orbis, £3.
The Tsavo Story, by **Daphne Sheldrick**. Collins, £3.25.

The first two books are quarto size and bulky, the former 127, the latter 300 pages, solid and heavy. Both are well illustrated, the latter profusely in colour, though suffering somewhat from inferior reproduction, the former a striking testimony to the versatility—mammals, birds, fish, reptiles, marine molluscs, insects, flora and tribal types—of an outstandingly competent artist, now denied alas, through an untoward accident, the full faculty of her painting hand; their reproduction is superb. Her numerous sketches, too, are vivid and lovely.

Joy's delightful book is a series of simple stories of everyday experiences with wildlife in the field and in the home—as pets. One can live with her in fancy and share her joys, disappointments and heartbreaks in the keeping of her furred and feathered friends. How well the reviewer knows from experience the *strange, injury feigning or death-shamming behaviour* of the juvenile Verreaux's eagle owl!

The eleven chapters of *Africa* provide a wealth of information, scientific and popular, on many aspects of vertebrate life and the flora of the savanna, but the reader is apt to be confused by the inclusion of much that is extraneous and seemingly irrelevant—too much on evolution, ancestry and classification, as well as many illustrations of mammals and birds, for example marsupials, the platypus and gyr falcon, which have no direct connection with Africa. The small distribution maps are not always easy to follow; the cheetah distribution outside the African continent is sadly at fault. It is surprising that neither the elephant, nor the rhinoceros are given specific chapters; perhaps they are without the terms of the title. An unfortunate inaccuracy is the statement that 'the Adamsons had to return to England'; they will remain in Kenya. Most informative and readable, the lion's life story covering 46 pages is a good example of the book's value.

Daphne Sheldrick writes a lively, vivid, well illustrated, informative and entertaining account of how a vast and arid 5000 square-mile expanse, devoid of most wild game except the larger dangerous species, was successfully converted into a major tourist attraction. How many of those privileged to visit the Tsavo Park, of which her husband David is Warden, will realise the constant struggle of the early years to achieve results while lacking essential resources? She summarises a park warden's responsibilities as those of 'naturalist, master builder, road maker, designer, engineer, mechanic, pilot, policeman, public relations officer, overseer, accountant and administrator'; she could have added others.

Primary considerations in Tsavo were to suppress poaching and develop communications and water supplies. Later, special attention was paid to the elephant situation, particularly with reference to the controversial problem—to cull or not to cull. Some of the arguments advanced may be based on faulty premises. Nature may not have played quite so important a part as suggested in the constitution of the environment, for it is known that for centuries the populous coast of East Africa obtained a steady supply of

ivory, especially large tusks, from the hinterland to trade for luxury goods with the Sultanate of Oman and with India. Man certainly for long had had a disrupting influence on the elephants of the hinterland—now partly in the Tsavo Park.

The author's dictum that man is 'detested by all wild animals of the animal kingdom' and 'hated by all other forms of life', is puzzling as well as anthropomorphic and curiously inconsistent when related to the behaviour of her 'orphans', large and small.

C. R. S. PITMAN

The Evergreen Forests of Malawi, by J. D. Chapman and F. White. Commonwealth Forestry Institute, University of Oxford, 1970. £3 or \$7.50.

Malawi is a small country by African standards but it has a delightful variety of topography and plant and animal life within its borders. This book by two dedicated botanists is a detailed and painstaking account of the small patches of evergreen forest which are scattered throughout the country, mainly in the uplands.

This is a specialists' book, for the topographers and serious students of Africa's vegetation; animals and birds are only mentioned in a short section under *The Environment, Human Activities* as 'other animals', which begins with the surprising statement that 'almost nothing is known'; this is far from the case. A chapter on fauna of evergreen forests would have been a valuable addition; the bird life is of particular interest.

Part 1 deals with the environment, human influences, plant geography and classification; Part 2 is a detailed description of the forests. It is an interesting fact that certain species of trees which occur in southern Africa reach their northern limits in Malawi while other species reach their southern limits there,—an indication that Malawi is a meeting-place of the southern and eastern African floras.

The description of the forests is well-illustrated with several profile diagrams of their composition and structure; perhaps the most pleasing feature is the sixty excellent black and white photographs of the forests taken by Chapman which give an excellent idea of what they look like. Of considerable interest are those of the Mlanje cedar *Widdringtonia whytei*, a species which reaches its northern limit on Mlanje Mountain and which is a truly magnificent tree in its setting of mist-shrouded peaks.

There is a good list of references but the maps are poor; one on a very small scale shows the position of mountains and upland areas in Malawi, and the other the phytogeographical regions of Africa. A large-scale folding map seems to be a serious omission from an otherwise admirable work which is a valuable contribution to the study of Africa's vegetation and forests.

RICHARD WILLAN

Biogeography and Ecology of Madagascar, by G. Richard-Vindard and R. Battistini. Junk, The Hague, DG 190.

Any naturalist with a special interest in Madagascar must have wished for an authoritative reference source giving both a concise account of the physical characteristics of the island and a general description of the flora and fauna. Richard-Vindard and Battistini have collected a well-balanced set of papers written by some of the foremost French natural scientists concerned with Madagascar, and their volume provides a useful guide which should adequately meet this need. There are contributions on the landscape, geology, climatology, soils, vegetation and animal life (insects, arachnids, terrestrial molluscs, fishes, reptiles, birds, mammals). In addition there is ample discussion of the serious problems of erosion and deforestation and