

unexpected, such as facts about the domestication of the eland in Russia or the fact that polar bears are poor swimmers and sometimes get their back legs bitten by ringed seals. The valuable point that Dr Grzimek puts over time and time again is that even hard-pressed animals can make a rapid come-back if given a little encouragement. The pity is that the style is occasionally too bright and assertive for total credibility. As an example of book production, the book is almost faultless; it is a pleasure to open it.

JOHN HILLABY.

### **Wild Animals in an African National Park, by Rennie Bere.**

Deutsch, 18s.

Game wardens, when they retire, tend to write lengthy reminiscences in which their many original observations are difficult to sort out of a welter of how-the-lion-nearly-got-me yarns. Mr Bere escapes this fault completely. Instead of reminiscing he gives us pretty straight natural history, and whenever he is briefly anecdotal his stories all make a worthwhile point. Evidently assuming that the reader is quite untutored in nature study (which, alas, is still true of most people) the author tells us simply and clearly about the animals, and a few of the birds, that he met with during his years as Director and Chief Warden of the Queen Elizabeth and Murchison Falls National Parks in Uganda. I thought him particularly good on elephant, hippo, lion, crocodile and Uganda kob, but he writes of many others also. He recounts too the problems facing conservationists: the poaching, the overstocking of hippos and elephants, the lack of money that hinders so many schemes. My only regret about the book is that it runs to only 91 pages, for I felt that the author had many more good things to say. A map is provided, and of the 25 photographs a particularly interesting one shows a monitor lizard making off with a crocodile's egg.

W. M. CONDRY.

### **The Story of Elsa, by Joy Adamson.** Collins, Harvill, 30s.

The publishers have called this book: "The full story of Elsa and her cubs published for the first time in one volume." Well, it is, and it isn't. The three earlier books have all been compressed into 319 pages (marred only by bad proof-reading and occasional left-overs of repetition) with a first-rate selection of photographs. The bare bones of this fantastic story are all there, told in Mrs Adamson's diary English; but so much is totally lacking. The foster-care of Elsa, and then of Elsa's cubs, was certainly of exceptional emotional concern to everyone involved, and primarily to the author, but there is next to no self-analysis of this deeper side of things. I kept on feeling that the book had been written by some third party who had scarcely ever seen a lion, let alone lived with one, loved one, lost one.

I personally would have welcomed more introspection, more conversational comments from someone who witnessed this remarkable man-animal involvement, and more from George Adamson who was half a conductor, half a second fiddle throughout the story. In these days of rigidly scientific behavioural studies it is fantastic, and refreshing, to read Joy Adamson's unashamed anthropomorphism—"Elsa came back very proud of herself," "she talked very agitatedly to them," "she was very nearly crying," "did she have any realisation of the extraordinary link she was between the two worlds?" Mrs Adamson is also prepared to give reasons for events where many behaviourists would fight shy of such conclusions—"Could it have been that she knew I was coming back?" "It is obvious that she was in love," "She went to sharpen her claws."

And yet this unique combination of Joy Adamson, George and Elsa managed to pull off a coup between man and beast that has few, if any, equals. There was Elsa killing that buck a few yards away, or permitting