

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 TITTLE

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

The Gibbons of Siberut

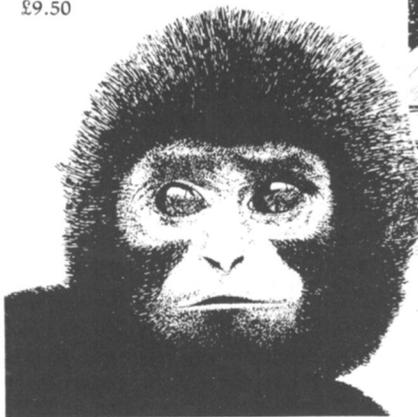
TONY WHITTEN

Foreword by
SIR PETER SCOTT

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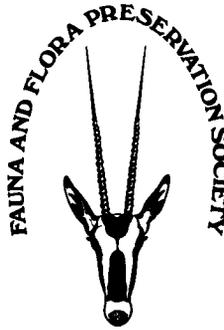
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