

turned filmmaker whose previous works are not best noted for their *vérité*. It is hard to take the portrayal of Eskimos seriously in a film where the invincible Seagal rides around in buckskins like a bad imitation of Daniel Boone and Clint Eastwood's 'The man with no name' rolled into one.

Such misrepresentations, though, are becoming a little too hackneyed, not to mention damaging, crass, and overtly misleading. In the face of such a cinema, where created myth, it would seem, is still preferable to any semblance of actuality, Fienup-Riordan's achievement is her recognition that differing cultural perceptions not only exist, but co-exist, in a way that should be illuminating for all concerned. Her careful exposure of the processes through which naive westerners have been taught by film to perceive Eskimos, is worthy of our attention. (Ian Higginson, Centre for History and Cultural Studies of Science, Rutherford College, University of Kent at Canterbury, Canterbury, Kent CT2 7NX.)

**THE ICE-AGE HISTORY OF NATIONAL PARKS IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS.** Scott A. Elias. 1996. Washington, DC, and London: Smithsonian Institution Press. ix + 170 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 1-56098-524-0. £13.25.

This book is the second in a series that details the Quaternary history of several regions within the United States (the first being *The ice-age history of Alaskan national parks*). The aim of the series is to educate the non-specialist reader in aspects of Quaternary science that are of specific relevance to the areas in question. In doing this, it is hoped that the reader will gain an awareness of the natural world in these places. This book is not intended to be used for textbook purposes, nor is it sufficient in terms of field examples to be regarded as a tour guide. However, it provides an interesting overview, written in an informal manner, of the physical processes that acted to shape the landscape, and of the biological issues that relate to the evolution of the modern environment in the national parks of the Rocky Mountains.

The book is split into two sections. The first consists of an introduction to a number of subjects within Quaternary science that are useful, in terms of background knowledge, to the reader to understand the subjects discussed in section two. Information about Quaternary palaeontology and geochronological methods are presented in a way that assumes no previous knowledge of these topics. This section of the book is very similar to the comparable section in the first volume in the series and begs the question whether every book in this series will carry the same first section. In fairness, however, the two books published to date benefit from the inclusion, albeit duplicated, of a simple summary of science relating to the understanding of the last ice age.

Having presented the necessary background information, the book describes the ice-age history of each national park in the Rocky Mountains. It is written in a style that reads as though the author is giving a public lecture. As various stories unfold, there are often interesting tangen-

tial discussions that relate indirectly to the subject matter, but that are fascinating to read nonetheless. This feature of the book is a credit to Scott Elias, whose writing style I find to be thoroughly entertaining. A very useful glossary is provided as an appendix, which will help the lay-person in understanding the text. In addition, a number of publications are cited that give references for readers wishing to know more about the subject.

Readers of this book will acquire an appreciation of the formation of the geomorphology within these parks, and therefore will be educated about geological and glaciological processes that acted, during the past 1.7 million years, to create the dramatic scenery in these regions. The various methods of formation of the numerous lakes that exist in these regions are also discussed.

The text is well supplemented by many instructive diagrams and pictures. Unfortunately, the lack of detailed maps, which could have indicated the exact locations of some of the field examples, will disappoint those attempting to find the features described. The scope of the book does not end with the Earth sciences; Elias also includes discussion on the biological and ecological issues since the last ice age. In addition, he also indicates what is understood about the human and other animal inhabitants of these regions at around the end of the last glacial. In doing this, he describes the transition of the post-glacial world from 10,000 years ago to the present-day situation.

In summary, this book provides the reader with an awareness of the natural world within these unspoilt regions of the United States. Although this is not an academic book, it will be of much interest to visitors who wish to know about the formation and evolution of these majestic regions, and how the floral and faunal communities have dealt with the significant climate change that has occurred since the end of the last glaciation. (Martin J. Siegert, Centre for Glaciology, Institute of Earth Studies, University of Wales, Aberystwyth, Dyfed SY23 3DB.)

**SHACKLETON'S BOAT: THE STORY OF THE JAMES CAIRD.** Harding McGregor Dunnett. 1996. Benenden (School Farm, Benenden, Cranbrook, Kent TN174EU): Neville & Harding. x + 150 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 0-948028-02-5. £20.00.

The story of the epic voyage of *James Caird* from Elephant Island to South Georgia will be familiar to readers of *Polar Record*. However, that should encourage, rather than deter, them from buying this book. Not only is the journey of 1916 recounted, but, as Sir Vivian Fuchs writes in his foreword (page iv):

Here, for the first time, is the consecutive story of the *James Caird's* survival. Originally she was saved by the Norwegian whalers at South Georgia in 1916. The boat then arrived in Birkenhead in 1919. Thereafter the history of her travels is quite remarkable — Middlesex Hospital, then the Albert Hall, the roof of Selfridges, Ely Place in Frant, Kent, Dulwich College as a gift, the British Polar Exhibition, the National Maritime Museum; and so to her final resting place back at Dulwich