

Attractive as it is, the Bourlière volume is nevertheless difficult to use as a reference work. The extensive index is liable to leave one frustrated if an attempt is made to use the book as a desk volume for checking facts about particular species. Each well-known animal has five to ten references and each will only produce a few words or a sentence. This is inevitable in a volume geared to geographical or ecological units. Happily, *The Living Mammals of the World*, by Sanderson, is available and can fill this gap with ease. Here the index leads one straight to a thumb-nail sketch of the animal and, usually, to a photograph as well. There is little to choose between this and the last volume as far as illustrations and presentation are concerned. Both have the same large format, the glossy quality, superb colour and black and white illustrations and detailed texts. As a general reference work, however, there is nothing in the class of the Sanderson volume in the English language at the present time.

Summing up the "general mammal book" situation, it can be said that, as an introduction, the Hvass book will serve well, but that, when more detail is needed, Bourlière can provide the natural history and the ecology, in his small and large books respectively, and Sanderson can provide the group-by-group reference work. All these volumes will amply repay bookshelf space.

D. M.

NATURE CONSERVATION IN WESTERN MALAYSIA, 1961. Published by the Malayan Nature Society, P.O. Box 750, Kuala Lumpur. Price (sterling), paper cover 12s. 6d., hard cover 17s. 6d.

This is the 21st anniversary number of the *Malayan Nature Journal*, a quarterly magazine, but this special number is not so much a magazine as a complete treatise on the conservation of animals, plants, soil, rivers, and rocks throughout Malaya and north Borneo. It is good reading, partly because its range is so wide but mainly, I think, because each writer is so obviously devoted to his subject. It stresses the importance of conserving all resources, especially in a country which is being rapidly opened up, and is addressed particularly to the rising generation of Malaysians, to make them aware of the extraordinary richness of their heritage. Over 100 schools in Malaya and Singapore now have their own nature societies, all members of the parent one.

The book is divided into four parts—General, Conservation and Environment, National Parks, Wild Life—and it ends with a glossary of Malay words, an index and three maps—one of South-East Asia, the others of Malaya and north Borneo. They show all the names mentioned in the text.

Space does not permit separate mention of the forty-five articles, but each is written by the person best qualified to do so and all are up to the standard one would expect from such contributors.

The editors, Wyatt-Smith and Wycherley, and all the others concerned, are to be congratulated on a splendid book; for letterpress, plates, maps and text-figures are all beyond praise and the advance planning and organization that made this possible are not the least

part of the achievement. Mrs. Ann Wilton's delightful line-drawings of Malayan beasts, birds, and insects are excellent and some of them masterpieces: her pair of seladang, facing p. 95, is the first entirely satisfactory drawing of this beast I have seen.

E. O. S.

LIVING WITH REPTILES. By KATHLEEN PICKARD-SMITH. Nelson. 18s.

This account of the experiences of the author, over some dozen years, of keeping reptiles and amphibians, is one for the pet-keeper rather than the serious herpetologist. However, it is fair to say that the book contains much information—mostly gained from first-hand experience—which could be useful to amateurs and professionals alike.

The style is narrative which makes for easy reading, but in a book of this length one rather misses some degree of specialized paragraphs with appropriate headings. There is an index; but this is limited to species, which is a pity, especially as only scientific names are given. It is quite right and proper to have these, but the novice who is not familiar with scientific nomenclature may be confused and even put off by not being able to find any common or popular names. One error in the index strikes the eye: *Rana edulis* instead of *Tana esculenta*.

Having made these somewhat critical points it should be made quite clear that this is a book well worth having on one's shelves. Nearly all the information is founded on personal experience, and a great deal of common sense is shown in connection with the feeding and keeping of the many species dealt with. There are flashes of fun and humour which are often lacking in books on animals.

The illustrations are excellent and deserve special mention.

M. K.

THEY WENT TO BUSH. By W. B. COLLINS. Macgibbon and Kee, 25s.

The greater part of this book is a personal account of the author's life as a forest officer in Ghana and of the men with whom he worked. This will be of rather doubtful interest to the ordinary reader who will, however, not be worried by the odd inaccuracies which may annoy Mr. Collins' former colleagues. The final chapter, "Guarding the Game", is more important, and it merits attention, for Collins states plainly what some of us were forbidden to point out before World War II—that the game reserves were a farce and had never existed except on paper.

It is rather frightening to find that a former Governor admitted in writing that he had little or no information as to the game animals which were found (in the so-called reserves) or the extent to which they were being destroyed. The officers administering the districts in which the reserves were situated could have told him very quickly!

The game has disappeared for ever from most of the savannah woodland that covers the northern two thirds of Ghana and it is only within the past few years that the first sizeable game reserve has been effectively established, and it is doubtful whether it can ever become a major tourist attraction.