

Mammals — Their Latin Names Explained: A guide to animal classification by **A. F. Gotch**; Blandford, £5.95.

Key Works to the Fauna and Flora of the British Isles and North-western Europe, edited by **G. J. Kerrich**, **D. L. Hawksworth** and **R. W. Sims**. Systematics Association Special Volume no 9. Academic Press, £7.80.

Apart from its misleading subtitle — no doubt imposed by a publisher terrified that nobody would know what a mammal is — A. F. Gotch's book is a most valuable work of reference. For about a quarter of the 4300 odd species of living mammal, he describes the meaning of both the Latin and English names, which can be very odd: it is by no means unknown for the name *minor* to be attached to the largest species of a genus. Most of the larger and all the better known mammals are included, the balance being the innumerable rare, localised and little known species, about half of them rodents (1500 species). There is also a brief indication of distribution, but although there are a few line drawings it is of course in no sense an identification book.

We are all in the debt of the Systematics Association for bringing up-to-date and expanding their former *Bibliography of Key Works* and making it an even more essential tool for the researcher and the naturalist. This is just a bibliography, with no text apart from the preface, but for those who want to track down the Homoptera-Auchenorhyncha, the Basidiomycetes or even the freshwater fish it will be invaluable for many years.

R. S. R. FITTER

Ecology of African Mammals, by **M. J. Delany** and **D. C. D. Happold**. Longman, £25.

Wildlife Management in Savannah and Woodland: Recent progress in African studies, edited by **S. S. Ayayi** and **L. B. Halstead**. Taylor and Francis, £12.

Almost twenty-five years ago, when I sailed through the Suez canal to take up a teaching appointment in Kenya, I was surprised to find that the students were still learning their biology from English textbooks. Since that time, although there has been a veritable population explosion of research on the African biota, textbooks in the English language for University students of ecology have remained uncommon. Delany and Happold have tackled a formidable task in trying to bring together this vast literature in a single volume that brings together our current knowledge on African mammal ecology. The result of their labours is a well-illustrated volume that will remain the starting point for students of African mammal ecology for many years to come.

They have divided their work into thirteen chapters arranged in four logical parts. Part 1 deals with both historic and contemporary aspects of mammalian zoogeography. This is followed by a section which describes the ecology of the main biotic zones, while Part 3 deals with life history phenomena, behavioural ecology, environmental physiology and energetics; the final chapter is on the population ecology of both large and small mammals. The authors' wide interest and knowledge have produced a book that for once does not consider only the large herbivores and predators.

The modern student of ecology will find the final section on the ecology of man and mammals of special interest. Frequently the wildlife biologist tends to be constrained by the more esoteric limits of his subject, so that a consideration of man in the context of wildlife and conservation is forgotten. This brief but important chapter will perhaps make us more aware that many more of our research programmes should be concerned with the management and utilisation of wildlife populations.

Wildlife Management in Savannah and Woodland results from the Ibadan/Garua International Symposium on Wildlife Management which drew together wildlife biologists both from East and West Africa. Most of the research on African wildlife in the last twenty years has been concentrated in the open savanna habitats of East and South Africa. The logistic problems posed in studying mammals in the wooded savannas of West Africa or their ecological analogues in Central Africa take new and as yet partly unsolved problems.

The overriding theme of the symposium was the recognition of the fact that in West Africa wildlife management is primarily concerned with the rational exploitation of its natural resources. This is important when we remember that the populations of most West African nations derive up to 100 per cent of their protein from large and small wildlife species. This volume contains 26 of the 40 papers presented, arranged in four sections which deal with population dynamics and monitoring of wildlife populations, habitat utilisation by wildlife, the effects of fire in East and West African habitats, and an important final section on management, training and education. It is encouraging to notice that 14 of the papers were presented by African wildlife biologists, which demonstrates that training programmes at the local level are now paying dividends. All those interested in the study of wildlife in wooded savanna will find this a valuable source.

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Australian Endangered Species by **Derrick Ovington**. Cassell. £15.

Canadian Endangered Species, by **Darryl Stewart**. Gage, Toronto.

With the ever-increasing threat of a massive worldwide loss of species it is important to identify those at risk so that measures can be enacted to prevent their extinction. In this regard more and more nations are producing detailed national lists of endangered species and as part of their conservation education campaign producing glossy books on the subject. Derrick Ovington, Director of the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service and Chairman of the IUCN Ecology Commission, has written an excellent reference text on Australian wildlife conservation. The species accounts are based on a series of descriptive leaflets issued by the National Parks and Wildlife Service as part of its campaign to promote awareness of endangered species and their protection. 23 mammals, 18 birds and 2 reptile species or subspecies are listed, each with a paragraph on description, breeding, distribution, ecology and conservation, as well as a distribution map of present and former range and a full-page colour drawing. However, the merit of the book lies not so much with these accounts, which the author admits do not include all endangered species, but in the two additional sections describing how Australia's wildlife has arrived at its present predicament and what can be done to reverse the trend: *Australian Scenario of Extinction* includes chapters on *People and Wildlife*, *History of Extinction*, *Wildlife Biology*, and a *Conservation Chronology*, and is a mine of information, and *Conservation Strategy* includes a thorough discussion on *Conservation Action Priorities*. This book will be of interest to both the professional conservationist as well as the general reader.

Canadian Endangered Species is the softback edition of a book first published in 1974; as the text has not been updated since then, the species accounts are of limited use for up-to-the-minute information. Written in popular style for the non-specialist, the book is intended as an introductory text. Mammals, Birds, Reptiles and Amphibians, and Fish are listed, plus a section on extinct species. The 32 colour plates include one of the best photographs I have seen of the highly endangered black-footed ferret.

JANE THORNBACK

The Penitent Butchers, by **Richard Fitter** and illustrated by **Sir Peter Scott**, £2.65 from the FPS office.