

shattered leg—a cruel injury aggravated by irritatingly painful, though mainly superficial, porcupine damage—called for an improvised ‘bush’ operation, skilfully carried out with meticulous care. The reader is left to judge the wisdom and justification for returning to the wild dangerous carnivores after long and happy association with man.

There is much useful information concerning the care and management of wild animals; the excellent monochrome illustrations are eloquent. An absorbing book which cannot be too highly recommended.

C. R. S. PITMAN

Lake Chad, by Sylvia K. Sikes. Methuen, £3.95.

The author was born in Kenya, educated in England, and since 1947 has worked in various parts of Africa. Four times between 1955 and 1970 she has visited Lake Chad and on the last occasion, sponsored by the Guardian/Eyre and Spottiswoode Exploration Bursary, she took a yacht, the *Jolly Hippo*.

Chad remains the least known of the great lakes of Africa for it is away from the main lines of communication and difficult to navigate. The water level varies with the rainfall—the average depth is less than 2m—and it is girt with swamps, shoal waters, floating islands and ancient dune systems. It is well known for its amphibious Yedina people—‘pirates of the papyrus’—who make boats of gourds and papyrus bundle rafts, which are comparable with the papyrus rafts of Lake Victoria and the ancient boats of Egypt; their cattle have swollen horns which help them to swim long distances. The abundant fish fauna proves a former water connection right across the southern Sahara. Of these things you will read, but also of much else.

There is a long chapter, for example, on ‘the puzzle of the puddle’, why Lake Chad has remained fresh while nearly all closed basin lakes are more or less saline; the author’s explanation is not very convincing. Chapters on flora and fauna are somewhat uneven, but FPS members will be pleased to read that there are still quite a lot of sitatunga, and the dama gazelle, scimitar-horned oryx and addax are recovering in numbers in the Cameroons sector as a result of strict conservation methods. A proposal is made for a wildlife park along part of the Nigerian lake-shore. The last chapters are devoted to the inevitable modernisation of man, and it is sad to find over-fishing and over-grazing recorded—albeit with some careful development by the International Chad Basin Commission.

All in all, Sylvia Sikes becomes a worthy member of that small group of women explorer-naturalists in Africa, of whom not many have focused their attention on lakes and rivers, since the days of Mary Kingsley.

E. B. WORTHINGTON

Guide to the Freshwater Fishes of Britain and Europe, by Bent J. Muus and Preben Dahlstrøm. Collins, £2.25.

This attractive book was first published in Danish; in this English translation 130 species are listed, omitting certain endemics from the Caspian and Black Sea basins. A small distribution map accompanies the description of each species. Each fish is illustrated in colour, and a black diamond beside the name indicates that the fish occurs in the British Isles; the diamond is in brackets for introduced species such as rainbow trout.

An introductory section describes various attributes of fishes such as the parts of the body, methods of swimming, etc., and diagrams of vomerine and pharyngeal bones are included among the excellent black, white and brown illustrations. An account of freshwater habitats with their characteristic fish