

**The Andes**, by Tony Morrison. Time-Life, £4.95.

The Andes is another in Time-Life's series of 'The World's Wild Places', and keeps up the very high standard of photography for which all their books are renowned. It is based on a journey by the author down the entire length of South America from the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, the northern end of the mountain chain in Colombia, to southern Patagonia where the cold, barren, snow-clad Andes fall into the sea, only 100 miles north of Cape Horn.

Coffee-table books of this sort will often be bought for their pictures alone, which would be a pity in this case since the text is well worth reading. It is attractively written and gives a vivid impression of the wide range of mountain habitats to be found in the Andes; between each of the chapters is a section of photographs with brief text which are intended to illustrate some particular theme of Andean natural history. This rather disjunct approach perhaps makes the book rather more useful as an introduction to this fascinating region than as a reference book. Certainly it is a book to be read rather than dipped into, and some of the photographs require textual explanation, particularly that on page 124 labelled 'unidentified plant'! Altogether this is an excellent introduction to one of the world's most dramatic wild places.

A. H. FITTER

**Large Mammals and a Brave People: subsistence hunters in Zambia**, by Stuart A. Marks. University of Washington Press, \$15.

When our colonial hunters killed their trophies in Africa there was scant acknowledgment to local expertise. At best these other experts, whose communities had been in the business of hunting African animals even longer, came along as 'faithful bearers' or mere 'boys'. Currently, although moods are different, and the sport is considered less admirable, we are still uninterested in local practice. Anyone who kills anything is today a 'poacher'. Stuart Marks has set out to put the record straight. He wished to examine, with the methods that any behaviourist might choose, the particular predator named Man. There is great (and justified) talk these days of this species being the destroyer, but Professor Marks wanted to record a kind of predation that was simpler, gentler, more traditional in its manner and less wholesale in its effect. He chose for his study the Valley Bisa people of the Luangwa valley in central Zambia. After learning something of the Nyanja and Bemba languages he and his wife spent 14 months on location in 1966/67 and a further period in 1973. One result is this very serious book, crammed with information, that reminded me frequently of George Schaller's *The Mountain Gorilla*.

Professor Marks says his approach was eclectic. I suppose every author would make that point whenever unused files remain unused, but it is not a word that springs readily to mind when working through this book. It is a relief to read near its end: 'Defining the characteristics of all cultural and environmental variables is beyond the capacity of a single investigator in a short field study'. Nevertheless, the charts, lists, translations, genealogies, appendices, comparisons, data sheets and so forth give ground for the suspicion that he was trying to achieve that goal. There is occasional leaven, such as one tale about elephants. Wives are expected to restrict their behaviour during their husbands' long absences on elephant-hunting expeditions, but, in any case, their husbands can see from the quarry whether all is well back home: an elephant lying down indicates a death, copulation suggests adultery, and all odd behaviour compels an immediate return to discover its cause.

Considering the importance of man as a natural predator in the normal situation it is strange how infrequently this has been studied. Stuart Marks tells how ecologists and conservationists were 'aloof and unfeeling' towards problems involving people. He therefore, most vigorously, tried to fill the gaps and is, presumably, still doing so. His associate professorship is of Anthropology and Environmental Studies, a joint

curriculum I have not encountered earlier – but it is none the worse for that. In fact, if this environmental/ecological/historical/anthropological book is anything to go by, there is a need for such all-embracing chairs.

ANTHONY SMITH

**The Wild Sheep in Modern North America**, edited by J. B. Trefethan. Winchester Press, New York.

Coming on top of Dr V. Geist's monumental study of the behaviour and ecology of wild sheep in Canada (reviewed in *Oryx*, May 1973, p. 129), this volume must make the American wild sheep among the best documented of any species of large mammal. It consists of the 'proceedings of a workshop on the management biology of North American wild sheep' held at the University of Montana in 1974, with contributions by wildlife biologists from every state containing wild sheep from Alaska to Mexico. Nineteen reports on the status of sheep in each state are followed by a chapter by Dr Geist on the general theory of management of mountain sheep and by the reports of four groups set up to make recommendations on the management of the four major races of sheep: desert and Mexican bighorn, California bighorn, Rocky Mountain bighorn and Dall and stone sheep.

The conference reports and discussions are reproduced verbatim and provide a valuable source of information on particular populations, but the lack of any summary or concise review of the status of the group as a whole will be a source of frustration to anyone trying to extract this information in the compilation of less specialised works. However, one saving grace in this respect is the provision, in a loose envelope, of a large map showing the location of the enormous number of isolated populations into which the sheep have been fragmented, coded to indicate the race concerned and its status.

The sheer number of contributors represents a great wealth and diversity of experience in managing ungulates for a variety of purposes – experience that could well be relevant in other species. One of these purposes is of course trophy hunting which appears to generate a language of its own – in Colorado, we are told, 'the older animals are all broomed off to less than full curls'!

G. B. CORBET

**Biogeography and Ecology in the Canary Islands**, edited by G. Kunkel. Junk, (Monographiae Biologicae vol. 30) 160 Dutch Guilders.

The opening up of easy access to the Canary Islands in the last two decades has meant not only a vast increase in tourism, with its consequent benefits and dangers, but also increased opportunities for scientists to visit and explore the islands; as a result, more knowledge has been obtained about them in the last 25 years than in the previous 150, as Dr Kunkel points out. This is but one example of the recent greatly increased interest in the biology of islands and archipelagos, which can tell us so much about plant and animal distribution, survival and evolution.

This volume, one of the publisher's long series of scholarly monographs on biogeography and ecology of various areas of the world, is a book for specialists; it is not for the amateur naturalist seeking general information for a visit to the Canary Islands. There is, however, a great deal of useful information here, but some of it is not easily accessible even to the trained scientist. Here the blame must be placed at the publisher's door. The contributors were evidently asked to write in English, and the publishers should have provided expert assistance in rendering the manuscripts into correct English. In some places it is quite incomprehensible, which is unfortunate both for the reader who cannot understand it and for the writer whose efforts have been wasted. I am sure the editor (also not English) has done his best,