

# Book reviews

## **The Value of Conserving Genetic Resources**

Margery Oldfield

available from Superintendent of Documents,  
US Government Printing Office, Washington DC 20402,  
USA. 1984, \$8.50.

Several other books have been produced on this topic in the last few years, but this present volume is not only broad in its scope but written with a clear and authoritative style. Numerous photographs illustrate the text giving the non-specialist reader an idea of the appearance of many of the obscure plants mentioned. Detailed bibliographies and a good index complete a work of reference which should be on the shelf of every library in every school and college.

*John A. Burton*

## **Ecology and nature conservation in London. Ecology Handbook No. 1**

Greater London Council, 1984, £1.26 including postage and packing.

## **A guide to habitat creation. Ecology Handbook No. 2**

Chris Baines and Jane Smart

Greater London Council, 1984, £1.76 including postage and packing.

The astonishingly rapid growth of urban nature conservation in recent years is bringing a new wave of energy into London in support of its growing wildlife populations. Protection of the urban wildlife scene is, however, generating different and sometimes more challenging tasks than those encountered in the countryside. *Ecology and nature conservation in London* and *A guide to habitat creation* are the first in a new series of 'Ecology Handbooks' published by the GLC, designed to encourage and assist both the amateur and professional conservationist alike.

The first volume describes how the GLC's recent policies on nature conservation are helping to promote new conservation initiatives by providing advice on managing existing habitats and on the creation of new ones, by developing a data-gathering project on all aspects of London's wildlife, through the London Wildlife Trust, and by

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providing grant aid to boroughs and local organisations for ecological projects, as in the case of the birch-willow woodland at Gunnersbury Triangle. The final chapter outlines the roles of the various voluntary conservation organisations operating in London and how they collaborate with each other and the GLC to achieve effective action on the ground.

Official landscapes, such as the public parks, school and hospital grounds are largely sterile environments in wildlife terms, but offer enormous scope for improvement. The second volume in this series provides advice on how these areas can be enhanced by creating grasslands, woodlands and wetlands which, by design, are particularly attractive to wildlife. Chapters on each of these habitats, including wastelands, provide the practical know-how on their creation, with many tips promoting their rapid establishment. The inclusion of bibliographies for each habitat type provide a most valuable addition to this practical handbook.

These two volumes, lavishly illustrated in colour, are essential sourcebooks for all concerned with urban nature conservation. It is hoped that the wildlife policies of the GLC survive its imminent demise.

*Chris Leon, IUCN Conservation Monitoring Centre, The Herbarium, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew*

## **Also received**

### **Feathered Friends**

Ian Niall

Chatto and Windus, The Hogarth Press, 1984, £9.95

### **Kingfisher Dictionary of Animals**

Consultant Editor: Michael Chinery  
Kingfisher Books Ltd, 1984, £9.95

### **The Natural History of Selborne**

Gilbert White

Papermac, 1984, £8.95

### **Voiceless Victims**

Rebecca Hall

Wildwood House Ltd, 1984, £5.95