

established. Other more recent manipulation techniques include the provision of artificial nesting sites, which is helping the bald ibis in Turkey; the reduction of competition for nest sites to favour species such as the cahow; the elimination of introduced predators, a method used extensively in New Zealand; supplemental feeding, which hopefully will stop the decline in the California condor; fostering by similar species, e.g. whooping cranes being successfully introduced into sandhill crane nests; and removal of populations to safer areas, as was done with the seven remaining New Zealand black robins taken to a nearby island.

This is an essential reference work for anyone involved in conservation of threatened birds.

TIM INSKIPP

**Reptiles of Northern and Central Europe**, by Donald Street. Batsford, £10.

Until fairly recent years the reptiles and amphibians of Europe were not well covered in English natural history books. Now such books appear with increasing frequency, and this one follows hard on the heels of the excellent Collins Field Guide published last year, reflecting the increasing interest in herpetology among naturalists — although the trend seems to have reached the academic zoological establishment!

The present book gives a clear and readable account of the different species, some 25 in all, of lizards, snakes and chelonians which inhabit northern and central Europe. The information covers external appearance, food, reproduction, behaviour, general habits, habitats and distribution; there are, unfortunately, no distribution maps. A useful introduction deals in a very general way with reptilian biology, including such topics as relationship with man, snake-bite and its treatment, and the care of captive animals. It is perhaps a pity that the author did not spread his net a little wider and discuss some of the very interesting physiological studies on thermoregulation and other topics made in recent years. There is, however, a good bibliography of publications dealing with the more traditional areas of natural history and an appendix on the reptiles of southern Europe.

Well illustrated and produced, it will be an attractive addition to the library of anyone interested in the herptiles of Europe, despite its somewhat restricted scope.

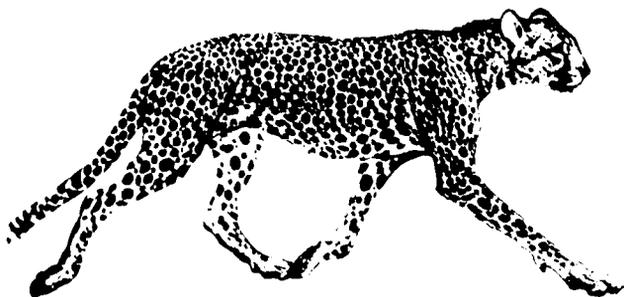
A. d'A. BELLAIRS

## Brief Reviews

*Greenshanks* (Poyser, Berkhamsted, Herts, £8.80), by Desmond and Maimie Nethersole-Thompson, is much more than a revision of Desmond's 28-year-old New Naturalist classic. It represents a full lifetime's work on his favourite bird by our top ornithological monographer, helped by his daughter (and in various ways by the rest of his large family). A first-class book of its kind.

*Wildfowl of the World* (Blandford Press, Poole, Dorset, £7.50), by Eric Soothill and Peter Whitehead, is welcome as a fine collection of colour photographs of ducks, geese and swans, although unfortunately not complete. The text describes the birds, their behaviour, habitat, distribution, food, voice, display and breeding habits, in a compendious way. Buy it for its photographs.

*The Birds of Zanzibar and Pemba*, by R.H.W. Pakenham (British Ornithologists' Union, c/o London Zoo, £4.00, air mail £5.30), is the second in the BOU's excellent series of checklists. The first was for Libya. These two islands are little known or visited nowadays, and this excellent conspectus of their avifauna will be valuable when, as is hoped, tourism restarts, and will give ornithologists something to work on.



Cheetah, reproduced  
from *Wildlife in Peril*

An English edition of the Italian *Wildlife in Peril* by F. Baschieri Salvadori and Pier Lorenzo Florio (Westbridge Books, £9.50), despite some unauthorised changes by the English publishers, is a handsome and spacious volume, with numerous large, beautifully detailed illustrations by Piero Cozzaglio, all in colour and very well reproduced. The selection includes 94 mammals, 39 birds, eight reptiles, and three amphibians, and in each case their status is assessed and the threats explained.

*Wild Flowers of Northern Oman* (Bartholomew, Bromley, Kent, £5) by James P. Mandaville, most attractively illustrated in colour by Dorothy Bovey, describes 90 species of shrub and wild flower commonly found in the northern part of Oman, the region centred on Jabal al-Akhdar, but not those parts north of the 25th parallel. This will be of great value to the increasing number of visitors to the Gulf area. An Arabic edition is expected to be on sale in the Middle East early in 1980. A special feature of the book is the inclusion of the plants' vernacular names.

The *Natural History of Britain and Northern Europe* is a new enterprise on ecological lines by Hodder and Stoughton, edited by two British naturalists whose names guarantee excellence: Bruce Campbell and James Ferguson-Lees. The first two titles (£4.75 each) are *Coasts and Estuaries* and *Fields and Lowlands*, with ecological essays by Richard Barnes and Derrick Boatman respectively, and plants, invertebrates, birds, mammals and other vertebrates each dealt with by specialists including Gordon Corbet, Franklyn Perring, Alwyne Wheeler and Tim Halliday. Five artists have joined to produce the excellent colour plates. A useful series for any natural history library when complete.

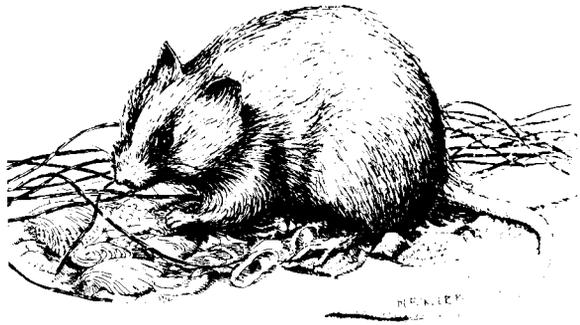
Alan Charig's *A New Look at the Dinosaurs* (Heinemann, £5.90) is an excellent and well-illustrated piece of popular scientific writing. World authority on the subject, he is well qualified to present recent changes in thinking about the natural history of this most famous group of prehistoric animals, and to clear away much of the misinformation, copied from book to book, that prevails. For instance, while the largest known dinosaurs weighed 80 tonnes, the smallest were no bigger than a mistle thrush. Read on . . .

*The Bird-Watcher's Guide to the Wetlands of Britain* (Batsford, £4.50), by M.A. Ogilvie, is a useful annotated gazetteer to 253 lakes, reservoirs, estuaries and other wetlands in Great Britain, with indications as to which kinds of wader and waterfowl are most likely to be seen. A valuable reference book.

*The Public Life of the Street Pigeon* (Hutchinson, £6.95), by Eric Simms, is a popular monograph of the feral pigeon of our towns. It is good to see at last the bird being taken seriously by ornithologists. Another good read for ornithologists and bird-lovers alike.

Four booklets of the countryside, with colour photographs (Jarrolds, Norwich, 80p): *New Forest and South Wales*, written and photographed by Heather Angel; *Lakeland* and the *Yorkshire Dales*, written by Norman Duerden, with photographs by himself and others: attractive little appetisers for their regions.

Sanibel cotton rat,  
from *The Nature of  
Things on Sanibel*



Anyone who has visited Florida's delectable Sanibel Island will enjoy *The Nature of Things on Sanibel*, by George R. Campbell, a discursive, informative, anecdotal account of the wildlife, enlivened by the resident author's distinctive humorous approach and Molly Eckler's beautifully sensitive drawings. These include the Sanibel cottonrat *Sigmodon hispidus insulicola*, one of the island's two endemic subspecies; the other is a rice rat *Oryzomys palustris sanibeli*.

*The Observer's Book of Snakes and Lizards of Australia* (Methuen of Australia, Warne, £1.95) is the second and completely revised edition of a pocket-sized book that first appeared in 1959. Useful for the beginner or non-specialist, it presents clearly and precisely the basic facts concerning 62 of the more widespread and better known species, each illustrated with a first-rate colour photograph.

## Reports and Journals

The report of the Coypu Strategy Group, set up by the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food, recommends that 'an enhanced coypu control operation should be put into effect with the long term objective of achieving eradication of coypus'. Research should continue, legislation should be considered to tighten control of the import and exploitation of non-indigenous species, with powers for quick action against pest species, and efforts made to educate the public in the need for eradicating coypu (MAFF, Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AE).

*The Provisional Atlas of the Mammals of the British Isles*, edited for the Mammal Society by Henry R. Arnold, comprises 58 dot maps showing distribution collected on a 10-km square basis. It is described as a 'second progress report' of the recording scheme started in 1965 (ITE, Monks Wood Experimental Station, Abbots Ripton, Huntingdon, £3.00).

*Carnivore*, a new journal owned by Randall L. Eaton through the Carnivore Research Institute, covers carnivorous mammals including man; the Hon. Editor is Niko Tinbergen. The 19 articles in Vol. 1 part 1 include Markus Borner on the Sumatran tiger, Randall Eaton on the evolution of trophy hunting and N.G. Webb on boat-towing by a bottlenose dolphin in southern England. Part 2 with eight articles includes a second article on the bottlenose dolphin.

In *Atlantic Walrus*, A Literature Survey and Status Report, Wildlife Report No. 10 of the Fish and Wildlife Service (Washington DC 20560), Randall R. Reeves concludes that the Atlantic walrus is adequately protected by the controls on commercial exploitation coupled with the changes in native economies and life styles, but warns that human encroachment on the walrus's habitat could become a serious threat.

*The South African Red Data Book: Large Mammals*, by J.D. Skinner, N. Fairall and J. du P. Bothma, can be obtained from the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, PO Box 395, Pretoria 0001. The list of threatened taxa numbers 22.