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experience over many years and a 'good theoretical knowledge of nutrition, human health and biology'. Despite this, their report is somewhat inconsequential and thin on facts. They did, however, conclude that 'Any risk to the survival of the bowhead whale that might be posed by the continuance of aboriginal whaling cannot be justified on nutritional grounds'. The Cultural Anthropology Panel, benefitting from a larger participation, produced a more solid document, the value of which may be less ephemeral than the others.

The value of this book is greatly enhanced by inclusion of the Kapel and Petersen paper, 'Subsistence Hunting—the Greenland case'. Their well-documented and illustrated review is orderly, informative and critical. It provides a good basis for current controversial problems of whaling (and sealing) in Denmark's overseas territories—but with one important omission: details of international trade in products from these marine mammals.

The quality of the book would have been improved by omission of a short paper by W.S. Laughlin and A.B. Harper entitled 'Demographic Diversity, Length of Life and Aleut-Eskimo Whaling'. Embedded in the practically impenetrable prose of this muddled document are such gems as 'Both Aleuts and Eskimos are clearly addicted to whales' and that marine mammal hunting depends more on teaching ('intense and specific programming of') children boat handling and navigation than does the hunting of land mammals!

There are indications that commercial whalers in countries such as Norway, Iceland and Japan will seek to have their activities included in the hazily defined category of 'aboriginal whaling for local consumption', in order to evade the implications of the 1982 decision by the IWC that commercial whaling should cease everywhere by 1985/86. The next Special Issue of IWC Reports on this subject may be very different from the present one.

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The Badgers of the World

Charles A. Long and Carl Arthur Killingley

Charles C. Thomas (Springfield, Illinois), 1983, \$39.75

This book is frustrating. Badgers are popular animals and there is a wealth of fascinating information available on their biology and relations with man, but these authors' compilation is disappointing. They state that,

'it is difficult today to write a manuscript in the old-fashioned natural history style because there is such disparity in basic observations and popular information on the one hand, and elegant and highly technical scientific information on the other. We have attempted to walk a tightrope between.'

Unfortunately they have fallen off. The old-fashioned natural history writers are a pleasure to read because of their literary skills. Long and Killingley have amassed a pile of popular and scientific information but it is poorly organised: muddled, sometimes repetitive and occasionally contradictory. Worse, discussion and comment are often so lame or badly stated that one wonders if the authors have fully comprehended the subject themselves. The book does have a place on library shelves, however, because it is a useful source of information which is otherwise difficult to obtain, namely on taxonomy of badgers and the biology of species other than the European.

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A Complete Guide to Monkeys, Apes and other Primates

Michael Kavanagh. Introduction by Desmond Morris
Cape, 1983, £10.95

This is a fascinating book with excellent illustrations; the text is both informative and interesting, and in places entertaining. After an introduction to classification, evolution, primate origins and

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living primates, the bulk of the book is devoted to a systematic description of the primates, outlining the main features of their natural history, biology (anatomy and physiology), evolution and conservation, with more detailed descriptions of their ecology and behaviour.

First come the prosimians (the 'almost monkeys')—the five families of the 'lemurs' of Madagascar and the continental bushbabies and their allies (nocturnal leapers and creepers). These are followed by the tarsiers—'the odd ones out'—dry-nosed prosimians with simian features. There is then a section on New World monkeys—the marmosets and tamarins ('little squirrel-like monkeys with claws') and the larger monkeys with complex societies and, in the largest, prehensile tails. The monkeys of the Old World also fall into two groups—the leaf-eaters of Africa and Asia ('pot-bellies and odd noses') and the generalists of Africa and Asia ('intelligent manipulators'). Finally the tailless primates—the lesser and great apes ('acrobats and singers, intellectuals and strongmen') and humans ('upright revolutionaries').

The final chapter on the prospects for primates emphasises the influences of humans, which are mainly deleterious. There is an appendix detailing the classification of primates, and indicating those species that are endangered; a short but useful glossary; a list of books for further reading, also rather brief; and an index, only for primate species cited.

Thus, it is a delightful book, packed with information—a must for the general reader, including those students embarking on courses involving primates. It may be authoritative for the specialist, but I cannot agree that it is sufficiently detailed, as claimed on the dust-jacket. In his excellent Introduction, Desmond Morris points out that this book represents a much-needed follow-up to the *Handbook of Living Primates* by John and Prue Napier. It certainly excels in containing so many colour photographs and in the abundance of new information, but it is lacking in the synthesis of quantitative information, so usefully presented in appendices by the Napiers but so much in need of updating. Furthermore, in treating primates genus by genus, the specialist cannot find the information he wants on species, especially for

genera such as *Cercopithecus*, *Papio*, *Macaca* and *Presbytis*, where colour illustrations of each species would be so useful, apart from a quantification of features of morphology, ecology and behaviour species by species. While many misconceptions common in general texts on primates have been eliminated, quite a few still remain that are irksome to the specialist; it is inappropriate to detail them here.

Nevertheless, it is impossible to satisfy both generalist and specialist in one manageable volume, and the author is to be congratulated on orienting, and executing, this important task of publicising so effectively the fascinating and complex diversity of our closest relatives.

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Conserving Sea Turtles

N. Mrosovsky

British Herpetological Society, 1983,
£5.00

For years there has been a pressing need for a critique of sea turtle conservation practices with objective and realistic suggestions for improvements. This book is a synthesis of a wide range of information, from genes to ecological communities and social systems. The topics of the 14 chapters flow smoothly one to the other, giving the reader an extensive discussion of: the political background; turtle life histories; a standard research technique (tagging); a common, yet controversial management procedure ('head-starting'); a widespread and now much questioned technique (incubation of eggs in styrofoam boxes); an expensive, technologically sophisticated, 'high profile' programme on the most endangered of sea turtles; the much disputed turtle farm; a policy problem with 'genetic mixing'; a conundrum of conservation categories; the case for credibility; the issue between attitudes and actions; a taxonomic problem with critical implications for conservation policy; and the relationship between biological conservation and economics. The book is relevant to more than turtles, providing a dispassionate, yet intimate, view of both specific and general problems in the conservation of natural resources.