

importance as a centre for tropical sea birds, especially the Wideawake or Sooty terns which breed there in huge colonies or "fairs". The expedition gathered much fascinating new information about the habits and breeding cycles of these and other birds—boobies, boatswain, and frigate birds in particular. They found that all but the terns had been driven from once abundant breeding sites on the island to outlying stacks, by the appalling predation of feral cats. This is a distressingly familiar story and one wonders if any attempt could be made to control these animals.

Studies were also made of the Green Turtle, now protected, which lays its eggs on the beaches. The author devoted some time to research among the island's archives, and he includes an interesting historical chapter.

The expedition consisted of four permanent members, including the author's wife—who must surely be the pattern for every expedition's wife—and three additional men who joined for shorter periods. The excellent lecture and film given recently in the Festival Hall, London, by two of the members bears out the book's impression of a very happy and well-organized expedition which has done valuable work. The book is illustrated by good photographs and drawings, and there is a clear map.

A. M. V. B.

NATURE AND MAN. By JOHN HILLABY. Progress of Science, series No. 9. Phoenix House. 9s. 6d.

This is an excellent book and I recommend it very highly. It is one of several edited by Nigel Calder and intended for young people interested in scientific careers, each book giving authoritative information about a particular science and containing a chapter on careers. If all these books are as good as *Nature and Man*, it must certainly be an extremely interesting and valuable series.

Nature and Man is about the balance of nature and man's place in the balance, which he has abused, and his changing attitude towards it, which is shown by the existence of such organizations as The International Union for the Conservation of Nature. John Hillaby writes most interestingly about such things as great animal migrations, odd survivals from the past, animals which will become extinct unless steps are taken to preserve them, man's influence on his environment and his destructive powers, as well as his efforts to preserve and conserve. The book is very well thought out, very informative and very well written. I cannot see it failing to absorb any young person

[but not under about 14 though the series is intended for "12 upwards"] even remotely interested in nature, and being very useful for those planning careers as naturalists, biologists, ecologists or conservationists. In fact, for a child wanting vaguely to do "something scientific", but not quite sure what, this book might be just the one needed to persuade him to devote his life to some form of conservation work.

The book is well illustrated with photographs and Jane Burton's excellent drawings and diagrams.

M. D.

AT HOME IN THE ZOO. By GERALD ILES. W. H. ALLEN. 21s.

This book is an honest account of the trials and triumphs of zoo management, told by a man clearly devoted to his work. Many years of zoo experience are condensed in its 250 pages, and despite the anecdotal form of presentation, much can be learnt from it on the important subject of wild animal husbandry.

The zoos of the world are becoming increasingly important in the role of wild life conservation. Every expansion of man's civilized world endangers further wild species and heightens the duty of the zoos and their staffs as custodians of the vanishing faunas of the globe.

The special experience called upon inside zoological gardens to ensure the preservation of rare and valuable species by establishing successful conditions for survival and reproduction in captivity, is all too often passed from mouth to mouth and generation to generation, without written record. Gerald Iles' book is a valuable record of such experience that will not remain hidden in this way. From his mistakes and his successes, faithfully reported as they are, it is possible, in a few hours, to benefit from his lifetime of incessant pre-occupation with the many strange and unexpected problems of zoo life.

Particularly impressive, for anyone who considers zoo work as a soft life surrounded by beautiful creatures, is the four-page diary giving details of a typical day in the life of a zoo director. It begins at 7.30 a.m. and ends at 11.30 p.m., after passing through a maze of activities during which the zoo man becomes in quick succession a midwife, a publicist, a works supervisor, a dietician, a vet, an office executive, a public relations official, a zoologist, an animal dealer and a lecturer. Many readers will think that this typical day in the life of a zoo director is exaggerated and carefully selected. Any zoo man reading the book will know that it is not and, as with the rest of the book, will appreciate its accuracy.