

Mammals of the Neotropics, Volume 3, The Central Tropics: Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Brazil by Eisenberg, J.F. & Redford, K.H. (1999) University of Chicago Press, Chicago/London. 609 pp. \$US80.00/£56.00. ISBN 0 226 19541 4

The third volume of *Mammals of the Neotropics* completes the review of mammals of South America; a fourth volume on Mexico and Central America is promised. This volume covers over 650 species in the same format as the previous volumes with notes on description, attributes and habitat, and on life history and ecology as appropriate. Maps present recorded distribution with areas of likely occurrences. Some groups include keys or tables to the identification of genera, illustrations of skulls, tables of measurements etc. There are 19 plates by Fiona A. Reid of representations of the fauna. In view of the time lapse between volume 3 and volume 1 (10 years), there are attempts to identify changes in nomenclature in relation to the earlier volumes—nevertheless, there are species described as long ago as 1993 that are absent from this volume. To avoid duplication, much of the introductory or background information will be found only in the earlier volumes. There are some interesting ancillary contributions—the fossil record, biogeography. One can find all sorts of minor (and some major) quibbles with a book of this size and scope, but this is a fantastic contribution to the understanding of such a rich fauna of conservation importance.

Atlas of European Mammals by Mitchell-Jones, A.J., Amori, G., Bogdanowicz, W., Kryštufek, B., Reijnders, P.J.H., Spitzenberger, F., Stubbe, M., Thissen, J.B.M., Vohralik, V. & Zima, J. (1999) Academic Press, London. 484 pp. £37.50. ISBN 0 85661 130 1

One of the original prime objectives of establishing a *Societas Europaea Mammalogica* in 1988 was to produce a European mammal atlas. For the purpose of this atlas, Europe includes the Baltic States and omits the countries of the former USSR, as well as Turkey and Cyprus. It includes Iceland and the Atlantic Islands of Azores, Madeira and Canaries, and Spitzbergen. Species are mapped on the 50-km UTM grid and include post-1970 records. Accounts for 194 recognized species are given, including some very recent additions, such as *Eptesicus bottae*. The recorded distributions on the map omit records likely to be vagrants, and separate positive records since 1970 (with some allowance for

where species have clearly become extinct since 1970) and presumed distributions (where pre-1970 records exist and there is no evidence to suggest recent extinction). Each species map is accompanied by a brief text of distribution, geographical variation, habitat, population status, international legal and conservation status, and other information and key references. The common name for species is given in 33 European languages as appropriate. Despite being 10 years in the making, this atlas is up-to-date and will be a valuable reference for mammalogists and people with a wide range of other interests.

Mammals of Madagascar by Garbutt, N. (1999) Pica Press, Robertsbridge. 320 pp. £30.00. ISBN 1 873403 52 6

The remarkable endemism of the wildlife of Madagascar extends to its mammal fauna. This excellent account discusses 123 species of mammal recognized from Madagascar, nearly all endemic. Naturally, nearly half of the book deals with the amazing diversity of lemurs, an endemic group of primates, which comprise almost half the mammal fauna. Another key element is the less-well-known tenrecs, with 27 species recognized in Madagascar (and very few elsewhere). Of the 28 bat species, a few are also found on other islands of the western Indian Ocean or on the African mainland, but these and a small number of introductions (mainly rodents and carnivores) are the only species not more or less endemic to Madagascar. An introduction discusses the biogeographic zones and the influence they have on the fauna, and includes a checklist. A later chapter discusses conservation issues, protected areas and includes a 'where to watch mammals' guide. Appendices include an extensive bibliography. Each species has a text including guidance on identification, distribution (including maps) and populations, habitats and behaviour and, for many species, an account of threats and opportunities for viewing. The characteristics of some are illustrated with black-and-white drawings, but an impressive number of species are illustrated with high-quality colour photographs. There is no competition for this account of the exclusive mammal fauna of Madagascar.

Bat Biology and Conservation by Kunz, T.H. & Racey, P.A. (eds) (1998) Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington. 365 pp. £46.95. ISBN 1 56098 825 8

The 10th International Bat Research Conference, held at Boston University in August 1995, included four symposia, the proceedings of which are the content of this volume. The symposia dealt with current developments and reviews of phylogeny and evolution, functional morphology, echolocation and conservation, biology. While the first three are fundamental to our understanding of bat biology and conservation, and contain a wealth of knowledge on advancements and opinion in their various disciplines, it is probably the last chapter that will be of particular interest to the current readership. Eight contributions take differing approaches to the conservation needs of bats in separate zoogeographic regions of the world. Thus, the Neotropical and Middle American bat faunas are relatively poorly understood, but are by far the world's most diverse, and the authors present data identifying species of concern and the identification of key regions and habitats. In North America, Europe and Australia, with their much more limited faunas and long histories of investigation, examples of more targeted research and conservation activity are discussed, with assessments of how well such conservation programmes are developing and being implemented. The other mainland contribution concerns African woodland and provides examples of the range of issues relating to bat conservation in assess-

ment of bat populations and their threats, problems of unresolved systematics, the influence of bats on humans, and vice versa, and argues a conflict of interest in the loss of bat habitat through the enormous damage wreaked on African woodland as a result of the conservation of elephants. The other two papers deal with the conservation of fruit bats on the smaller (Oceanic) and larger (Philippine) islands of the Indian and Pacific Oceans.

Wildesel by Denzau, G. & Denzau, H. (1999) Jan Thorbecke Verlag, Stuttgart. 224 pp. DM79. ISBN 3 7995 9081 1

This monograph (in German) on wild asses contains information on: status as well as former and current distribution of African and Asiatic wild asses, taxonomy, history of discovery and cultural significance. It reviews reintroduction projects in different countries and describes the authors' own field observations of asses in the wild, including new information on territory size. Photographs and a table of criteria help distinguish between the subspecies and there is an extensive bibliography.