

drawing attention to these very appealing aspects of their behaviour, the authors have contributed considerably to the conservation of these species. I would have liked a somewhat more concise style—the book reads like an overdone article for the *National Geographic Magazine*, and especially the use of dozens of pseudo-comic names for animals is irritating (Bloody Mary, Lady Astor, Vodka, Cocktail, Yellow Peril, Black Angel etc. etc.). But the photographs more than compensate for any criticism one may have of the text—they are truly delightful.

HANS KRUK

An Artist's Safari, by Ralph Thompson. Collins & Tryon Gallery, £6 6s.

Anyone who has served on a selection committee for an art society knows that submitted works can be divided into three groups. The first and largest by far contains all those pictures that evoke a scattered support and long deliberation, the ones that are finally hung or rejected by a narrow margin. The second is the sad one that sparks off nothing; the third the pictures so immediately compelling that one's hand is raised before the brain seemed to have time to direct it. And more often than not the gesture proves unanimous.

Ralph Thompson's recent exhibition at the Tryon Gallery was this kind of success. It is not often one can see originals and their reproductions for immediate comparison, nor, I suspect, find such a faithful and close facsimile. This was a first impression. But while in the gallery I stayed with the originals, visualising how such work would have riveted the attention of a selection committee anywhere, and lightened a dreary morning.

Since then I have looked through this book a hundred times and sifted a few adjectives that might be used to describe it in a review. I think the only way is to analyse what one artist appreciates and most respects in the work of another. Every painter knows only too well the extent of his own capability and cannot be expected to go overboard for work he knows he could do himself if he believed it worth the doing. So the ones that make the impact are those whose original concepts, dexterity or presentation exceed one's own; the ones that can interpret a familiar scene with the individuality of a new experience, a fluency that offers the true delight of admiration. This book contains such work.

An Artist's Safari is further enriched by a great many field sketches and



notes as economical of line as they are vital, each a simple statement drawn from a far deeper understanding of how animals are put together and how they work. Scientific journals are dangerous places to 'go into print', especially if one proposes to use superlatives. But this concerns art, and art happily is still a matter of personal opinion. For what mine is worth, I believe these are the most technically competent, the most sympathetic, lively, free animal drawings ever to come out of Africa—or anywhere else.

KEITH SHACKLETON

Man and Wildlife, by **C. A. W. Guggisberg**. Evans, £3.50

Wildlife Preservation, by **Philip Street**. McGibbon and Kee, £1.50

Wild Harvest, by **Clive Roots**. Lutterworth Press, £2.25

These three books examine the particular relationship of man to wildlife with which the readers of *ORYX* will be familiar, but although there is a degree of overlap, the emphasis of each is distinctive.

Perhaps Dr Guggisberg's is the most satisfying because a nice balance of text and illustration both stimulates and makes one wish to browse. Tracing the chequered relations between beast and man back to neolithic cultures, he develops the subject to the present time when in a few cases the destructive trend has been reversed. Contemporary prints and photographs amplify the text; there is one enchanting reproduction by Thomas Bairns showing a mixed herd of quagga, blesbok and other species being hunted by bushmen, and painted just 34 years before the last quagga died ignominiously behind bars in Amsterdam Zoo. One third of the book is devoted to a world survey of important national parks and reserves, with maps, relevant statistics and lists of species of special interest, which makes it a useful source of reference.

Wildlife Preservation is an eminently readable account of the problems of saving animals from extinction, and the ways and means of reversing the situation. *Operation Oryx*, partly financed by the FPS, has a whole chapter to itself, and others document Asia, Africa and the Arctic.

Mr Roots's book is the most intellectually stimulating of the trio. The first section documents the progress towards the Animal Armageddon, a Doomsday account that documents the roles of hominid avarice, greed, ignorance and plain cruelty. Medical research and the pet business are indicted by facts. Part two, covering the 'sensible' harvest, deals with the history of the wildlife sanctuary movement, farming wildlife, controlled



A drawing by Ralph Thompson reproduced from his new book *An Artist's Safari*, reviewed above