

The first part of this book deals with the establishment of the Trust, with everyday life at Jersey Zoo, and the continuing drama of keeping captive animals content and fruitful; the second with a hilarious expedition (all Durrell expeditions are genuinely hilarious, it must be very thirsty work) to the 'beef mines' of Sierra Leone. After warning his assistants to expect a rough passage and spiders in the jungle hammocks, reality invariably consists of a Hollywood-style flat or luxury mountain-ranch lent by some convenient mogul friend. What a family connexion the man has! Closely pursued by an intrepid BBC film unit, they capture a group of colobus monkeys in the flesh and for the telly.

And lastly he describes his first attempt to collect the rare volcano rabbit, from the environs of Mexico City, with the object of establishing a breeding nucleus at Jersey. But wouldn't the rabbits' cause be better served by leaving them at home, and by using that fearsome energy to persuade others to do the same? Perhaps not yet. And few people do more sterling work in convincing the world's unconservationists that animals matter, and that they need sympathetic consideration.

It is a good read, in characteristic style. The chapter headings are extracts from his fan mail, expertly chosen and very funny. He couldn't possibly have written them himself, could he? No, no, he's an honest man, things happen all around him, and he is excellent company.

TONY SOPER

The Mammals of Africa—an Identification Manual, edited by **J. Meester** and **H. W. Setzer**. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington. Fascicle One with binder, \$8; complete, \$25.

When complete, this work will consist of fifteen parts with eighteen subparts, introduction, conclusion and index, covering all the mammal species and 'valid' subspecies known in continental Africa, the offshore islands, including Madagascar, and coastal seas. As such it will provide an up-to-date checklist for the whole African area, the most recent work having been that of Allen, 1939, which could be accused of being too uncritical of the validity of many named forms. Twenty-three authors are involved. What has now been published is the introduction and five of the parts, covering the five mammalian orders of Chiroptera, Cetacea, Pinnipedia, Hyracoidea and Sirenia, and is the work of seven of the authors.

In general form, each part has many common features. First there are keys to the sub-orders (if any), and to the families which occur in Africa. Within each family is a key to the genera and within each genus a key to the species. Each species entry has a note on the distribution, a list of subspecies giving geographical location, and, where it was felt necessary, a note on the taxonomy. Each part ends with a list of references and other relevant literature.

These keys are based for the most part on characters readily discernible from an external examination. In some cases it would be difficult to identify the characters unless the animal were dead, or at least immobilised, but in general it should not be too difficult to use the keys to identify living animals.

If it is understood that, as the title indicates, the manual is an aid to the distinguishing of one African mammal from other African mammals, it will be a most useful work. Like all regional identification keys it must not be taken to have universal significance.

As a checklist it has a much wider significance and represents the most up to date views of a number of acknowledged experts on Africa's mammalian fauna. One of the paradoxes of African zoology is that while each area has been well studied, very few attempts have been made to treat the whole continent in single comprehensive works of reference.

My only sorrow is that, having mentioned the characters necessary to identify the animal, there is no attempt to describe the appearance of the animals or to give as a regular feature simple information like head and body lengths, a knowledge of which would reassure the diffident field worker that his identification by key is probably correct.

MICHAEL BRAMBELL

Joy Adamson's Africa, by Joy Adamson. Collins, £4.25.
Africa—Hunters and the Hunted of the Savannah, by Felix Rodriguez de la Fuente, translated by John Gilbert. Orbis, £3.
The Tsavo Story, by Daphne Sheldrick. Collins, £3.25.

The first two books are quarto size and bulky, the former 127, the latter 300 pages, solid and heavy. Both are well illustrated, the latter profusely in colour, though suffering somewhat from inferior reproduction, the former a striking testimony to the versatility—mammals, birds, fish, reptiles, marine molluscs, insects, flora and tribal types—of an outstandingly competent artist, now denied alas, through an untoward accident, the full faculty of her painting hand; their reproduction is superb. Her numerous sketches, too, are vivid and lovely.

Joy's delightful book is a series of simple stories of everyday experiences with wildlife in the field and in the home—as pets. One can live with her in fancy and share her joys, disappointments and heartbreaks in the keeping of her furred and feathered friends. How well the reviewer knows from experience the strange, injury feigning or death-shamming behaviour of the juvenile Verreaux's eagle owl!

The eleven chapters of *Africa* provide a wealth of information, scientific and popular, on many aspects of vertebrate life and the flora of the savanna, but the reader is apt to be confused by the inclusion of much that is extraneous and seemingly irrelevant—too much on evolution, ancestry and classification, as well as many illustrations of mammals and birds, for example marsupials, the platypus and gyr falcon, which have no direct connection with Africa. The small distribution maps are not always easy to follow; the cheetah distribution outside the African continent is sadly at fault. It is surprising that neither the elephant, nor the rhinoceros are given specific chapters; perhaps they are without the terms of the title. An unfortunate inaccuracy is the statement that 'the Adamsons had to return to England'; they will remain in Kenya. Most informative and readable, the lion's life story covering 46 pages is a good example of the book's value.

Daphne Sheldrick writes a lively, vivid, well illustrated, informative and entertaining account of how a vast and arid 5000 square-mile expanse, devoid of most wild game except the larger dangerous species, was successfully converted into a major tourist attraction. How many of those privileged to visit the Tsavo Park, of which her husband David is Warden, will realise the constant struggle of the early years to achieve results while lacking essential resources? She summarises a park warden's responsibilities as those of 'naturalist, master builder, road maker, designer, engineer, mechanic, pilot, policeman, public relations officer, overseer, accountant and administrator'; she could have added others.

Primary considerations in Tsavo were to suppress poaching and develop communications and water supplies. Later, special attention was paid to the elephant situation, particularly with reference to the controversial problem—to cull or not to cull. Some of the arguments advanced may be based on faulty premises. Nature may not have played quite so important a part as suggested in the constitution of the environment, for it is known that for centuries the populous coast of East Africa obtained a steady supply of