

demand for their resources is greater than ever. There is a role for areas that are strictly off-limits, but most reefs should be, and with the right approach could be, managed by the people who depend on them.

This point is made strongly for the marine environment in general throughout the Atlas, but the section on 'The challenge of conservation' is so general and theoretical that it gives little impression of what is happening on the ground, despite the many innovative, interesting and potentially successful approaches to management being used. The IUCN's Marine programme is barely mentioned, despite its involvement in successful projects, such as Oman's coastal zone management plan. Descriptions of case studies would have been useful, such as marine parks that are working, efforts at community management of marine resources, and how and why international and regional treaties are so important for the marine environment. It is hoped that the important topics and problems raised in both these books will stimulate the appearance of other publications showing possible solutions.

Sue Wells.

*Mammals of the Neotropics, The Southern Cone, Volume 2 Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay*, by Kent H. Redford and John F. Eisenberg (The University of Chicago Press, 1992, ISBN 0 226 70682 6, 430 pp., SB £31.50, \$39.50)

This is the second volume of a planned three-volume work, which will be the first complete account of the mammals of South America. The first volume dealt with Panama, Colombia, Venezuela, Guyana, Surinam and French Guiana. This volume covers the 360

mammal species of Chile, Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay. The area is physically diverse, dominated by the Andes Mountains but also including areas of desert, steppe, dry forest and temperate rain forest. The book has chapters for each mammalian order, each starting with a diagnosis and comments on reproduction, information on distribution and a discussion of history and classification. The chapter is then subdivided into sections for families, genera and species. For each subdivision there is a diagnosis or description, information on distribution, life history and ecology and, for species, a table of measurements and a distribution map. Chapters also include detailed reference lists. The book finishes with chapters on mammalian community ecology and the effects of man. The result is an excellent and very comprehensive account. It will be of value to a wide range of people, from taxonomists to lay readers. It is well illustrated with useful skull drawings, and black-and-white and colour plates depicting a selection of mammal species. The only disappointment is that there are not more of these excellent plates. This book is a must for anyone with an interest in South America and it is very keenly priced. I await with great interest the publication of the third volume in the series, which will cover the mammals of central South America but, apparently, this work is still in its early stages.

Simon Mickleburgh.

*Fishes of the Great Basin: A Natural History*, by William F. Sigler and John W. Sigler (University of Nevada Press, Reno, 1992, ISBN 0 87417 116 4, 448 pp., HB £30)

This volume is one of a series

covering various aspects of the natural history of the Great Basin in Utah, Wyoming, Idaho, Nevada, California and Oregon in the United States. The book begins with chapters on the Great Basin drainage area, a history of fishing in the area, the Endangered Species Act and desert fishes, the evolution and classification of fishes and fish biology and ecology. There follows a key to the native and introduced fishes of the area. The main part of the book is a detailed account of over 90 species that occur in the Basin. For each species there is an account of its economic importance, its range, a physical description, and information on size, longevity, food, feeding patterns, breeding habits, limiting factors and habitat. A final section on the preservation of the species relates mainly to the importance to the fishing industry. Rather confusingly there follows an annotated checklist containing more information for species already described in the main species section. The book finishes with appendices on the established fishes of the Great Basin and a list of fishes mentioned in the text that do not appear in the first appendix or the annotated checklist. A small number of species are illustrated with colour plates.

Overall, the book is confusingly laid out with information on species appearing in a number of places. Information on the conservation of endangered species is very limited. In the preface the authors stress that the amount of information presented for each species is directly proportional to its economic and ecological importance. Little-known highly endangered and localized species may thus receive scant attention. The book is heavily slanted towards the fishing

industry and thus may be a disappointment to those concerned with the conservation of the endangered species of this area.

*Simon Mickleburgh.*

**Gerald Durrell's Army** by Edward Whitley (John Murray, London, 1992, ISBN 0 7195 4949 3, 224 pp., HB £16.95)

The Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust (JWPT) has had 300 trainees from 70 countries through its gates over the last 15 years, and Gerald Durrell's inspirational project to train people to fight for their countries' conservation is slowly bearing fruit. Edward Whitley, himself heavily involved with his family in promoting conservation projects including, significantly, for FFPS, followed in Durrell's footsteps around the world, visiting 26 former trainees in 10 countries – St Lucia, Jamaica, Brazil, Gambia, Ghana, Nigeria, Madagascar, Mauritius, India and the Philippines. His factual, thoughtful and entertaining account should do much to publicize and promote the aims of the Durrells and JWPT.

It is a very perceptive account, as I especially appreciated when he dealt with countries with which I am familiar. While some of the subjects are making great strides in promoting more effective conservation, others face serious political and practical obstacles which prevent them from implementing what they have learnt – what they know to be essential – once they return to their jobs back home. Whitley's refreshing humour in his encounters with people and rare wildlife helps to offset such depressing problems, including the devastation that he observed in his travels around the tropics. His optimism that people will surely

realize what is going wrong in time to save the planet is reassuring and, it is hoped, realistic. *David J. Chivers, Cambridge.*

**Memories and Musings of an Octogenarian Biologist** by Colin Bertram (Colin Bertram, ISBN 1 85421 157 9, 256 pp., HB £14.95 from Images, Units 7/10, Hanley Workshops, Hanley Swan, Worcestershire WR8 0DX) and

**Memories of Three Lives** by Guy Mountfort (Merlin Books, Braunton, Devon, 1992, ISBN 0 86303 554 X, 228 pp., HB £10.95) These two very different books are by two very senior conservationists, one a professional and the other an amateur biologist. Colin Bertram, who has already written his autobiography (*Antarctica, Cambridge, Conservation and Population: A Biologist's Story*, 1987) offers 80 short essays and four short stories. Guy Mountfort, on the other hand, has written 'what amounts to an autobiography'. Both authors, incidentally served on our Society's Council in the days when it was called the Fauna Preservation Society.

Guy Mountfort's book reflects the sanguine temperament needed for his highly successful career in advertising and public relations. His three lives are his family and business, his brief wartime army interlude, and his final years in wildlife conservation, when his great achievement was the launching of Operation Tiger. He was fortunate in belonging to that all too brief period in the history of wildlife conservation when an amateur could actually achieve something. One is tempted to call it the Peter Scott period, for everything has certainly changed since that many-sided man retired from the scene.

Before World War II nature conservation was hardly seen

as a public need, and those few able people in the field, like Charles Rothschild and Mrs Lemon of the RSPB, were only able to achieve in a minor key. Between 1945 and 1980 a comparatively small group, headed by Julian Huxley, Max Nicholson and Peter Scott, created or helped to create two major international bodies, IUCN and WWF, and in Britain the Nature Conservancy Council. This was the milieu in which Guy Mountfort was able successfully to lead four pioneer expeditions, to the Coto Donana in Spain – in the heroic age when you could only get in on mule-back – the Danube, Jordan and Pakistan, and to invent and largely help to raise the money for Operation Tiger.

So he has a story to tell that few of his successors will be able to match, for conservation has now become a matter of mission statements, grant-aid applications and lobbying. The pioneers riding their mules always have the best of it!

Colin Bertram's collection encompasses a remarkably wide field, from skating on the fens near Cambridge in the winter of 1917, to musings among the wreckage of the whaling station on South Georgia after the Falklands War, passing through the tropics *en route* for a shipwreck on a river in Guyana and fishing for tuna in the Red Sea. His versatility even extends to a short poem for a cat in the Antarctic. He ends on a somewhat sombre note, fitting to one who has spent much of his life warning the world of the risks of human overpopulation. World population has more than doubled since he started to warn us.

Conservationists, especially bureaucratic ones, should read both books to see what they have missed.

*Richard Fitter.*