

million tons initially to some 2 million tons in 1967, and there is a general agreement that there is a potential annual krill surplus of about 100-150 million or more tons. This must have led to changes in the stocks of the other consumers. Already krill has been the object of a small experimental fishery, and the prospect of its uncontrolled exploitation is alarming. It is stated that the development of a krill fishery would probably allow us to double the present world catch of aquatic organisms from the world ocean. But on the krill depend the superb and spectacular bird and seal colonies as well as a host of less conspicuous but important consumers, including the surviving great whales. The editor suggests that the most pressing task may be the drafting of guide lines for an industry based on krill, such as has already been achieved for the Antarctic seals.

RICHARD M. LAWS

**Birds in the Australian High Country**, edited by H.J. Frith, illustrated by Betty Temple Watts. Reeds A \$9.50.

**A Field Guide to Australian Birds: Non-Passerines**, by Peter Slater and others. Oliver & Boyd, £3.

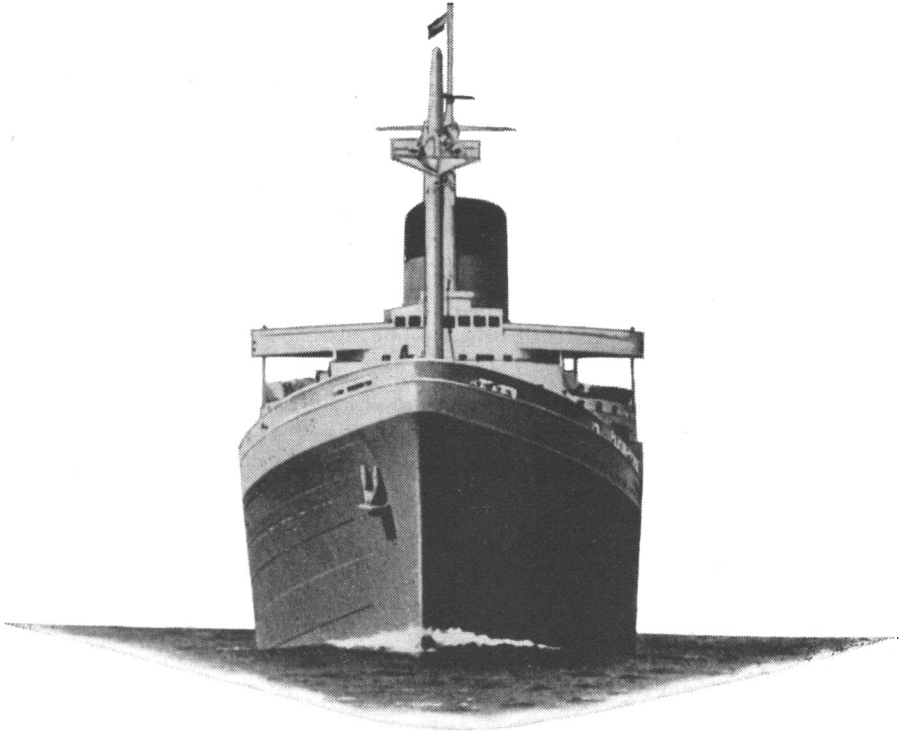
**Common Australian Birds**, by Alan and Shirley Bell. Revised edition, O.U.P., £3.75.

**Small Birds of the New Zealand Bush**, by Elaine Power. Collins, £1.25.

Studying this small collection of books on the birds of Australia and New Zealand brings home very forcibly to a Northern Hemisphere ornithologist how extremely fortunate we are in the bird artists who have been practising in Britain and North America in recent years. Roger Peterson for one has set such a high standard that although he now has his peers north of the Equator, there is no evidence yet that he has any south of it. Of the three Australian artists represented here, Betty Temple Watts is easily the best, and her best work is done with birds she is familiar with in the field; her touch is not nearly so sure with those which I suspect she had to do from skins, such as the Palaearctic waders. Before I correctly identified her picture of the wood sandpiper, for instance, I was surprised to think that the ruff was found in Australia. Peter Slater's birds are highly stylised; it would not be fair to complain of their not being more artistic, because they do achieve their purpose of aiding identification. Shirley Bell's pictures are the least good of the three; something very odd seems to have happened to the shapes of her introduced goldfinch, greenfinch and starling, for instance. Elaine Power's birds, however, strike me as being the best of the four – as birds – and by far the most artistic; they look genuine and alive.

Frith and his 14 collaborators deal with the birds of the south-eastern Highlands of Australia, in New South Wales and Victoria, including Canberra. In contrast to the plains that occupy most of Australia, this comparatively small area, containing the greater part of the continent's high ground, provides its most varied habitats, including an alpine zone. The text adequately covers identification, voice, distribution, habits, breeding and feeding. This is a useful book for both residents in or visitors to the area, but too big to use in the field. A most commendable feature is that the artist's royalties go to the Australian Conservation Foundation.

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Peter Slater's seven co-authors include four from the previous book. This is the first of a two-volume field guide which is obviously going to be a first-class addition to the world series of such guides. It is not the authors' fault if there are so many birds that they have to be dealt with in two volumes – most jackets have two pockets!

The Bells' little book, formerly quite useful, is now rather put in the shade by Slater's. It contains relatively few birds, and at £3.75 must be regarded as distinctly expensive. Elaine Power's is a most attractive picture book, with a painting and a black and white drawing for each of 20 birds, all beautifully reproduced, and a minimum of text.

RICHARD FITTER

**Animal Traps and Trapping**, by James A. Bateman. David and Charles, £3.50.

Catching wild animals for food, for their skins and to prevent them catching you, is fundamental to the life of man living primitively, whether today or half a million years ago. In colonising new areas, fur-trapping has often been the forerunner of agriculture and civilisation, so it is not surprising that the subject matter of this book fascinates not only many countrymen, but also urban men whether or not they escape into rural pursuits in their leisure time.

In dealing with the development and manufacture of traps, natural traps and man's traps for insects, fish, birds, mammals and general matters, Mr. Bateman has covered so wide a field that a compendium approach is almost obligatory and some aspects are dealt with cursorily. The first chapter, *An Historical Study of Trap Development*, is one of the best and leaves the reader thirsty for more details, as does the one on *Modern Manufacture of Traps*, with its account of the life of Sewell Newhouse and the Oneida community in New York State in the early nineteenth century.

Foot traps, pitfalls, leg-hold and cage traps, foot snares, neck snares, light traps, lobster pots and wildfowl decoys are all here, but there is overmuch reliance on traditional lore and many statements that a practical trapper would dispute. There is much of interest but it is not always critically assessed, and there are a number of factual errors, including inaccurate dates and titles of some Acts of Parliament.

HARRY V. THOMPSON

**Persistent Pesticides in the Environment**, by Clive A. Edwards. Butterworth, £5.

With the volume of pesticide literature reaching almost unmanageable proportions any attempt to survey even one aspect is welcome. This short work is mainly concerned to collect and assess the comparative data on residues of persistent pesticides in the environment, ranging from the earth, air and water, through the living organisms from soil fauna and flora to the vertebrates, including man. It is admittedly incomplete, but it does cover a remarkable amount of data, often presented in helpful summary tables, and there is a useful bibliography. More briefly, it examines the possible effects of these residues and here it is less satisfactory. Thus it barely touches on the mass of research dealing with declines in some bird populations, and gives an incomplete account of the significant field and laboratory work linking the