

each park with sketch maps, how to get there, the accommodation available, the vegetation and the mammals and birds of particular interest, with a check list of mammals and birds for the keen naturalist. This is followed by a comprehensive field guide to the mammals most likely to be seen, based on the Peterson system, excellently illustrated, with a short description of each species, and notes on identification and distribution. The third section, confined to the rarer birds of East Africa, is supplementary to Williams's *Field Guide to the Birds of East and Central Africa*, dealing fully only with those birds not included in that volume. This makes it imperative for anyone wishing to identify the birds to have both guides, particularly as the majority of the birds seen are likely to be those described in the earlier publications.

In this new guide the bird section is generally very well illustrated and the colour reproduction much superior to that of the earlier one. It is unfortunate that its overall excellence should be marred by faulty relative proportions of the birds in some of the plates, notably the kingfishers and rollers in plate 18 and the yellow-billed shrike and raven in plate 26, and by the lack of a scale in all plates. To the serious ornithologist the omission of scientific names opposite the plates is somewhat aggravating, but a minor fault in such a generally excellent publication, which no visitors to East Africa's incomparable national parks should be without.

N. R. FUGGLES-COUCHMAN

The Book of the Giraffe, by C. A. Spinae. Collins, 30s.

The Leopard by Peter Turnbull-Kemp. Bailey Bros & Swinfen, 65s.

Skilfully presented and well documented, *The Giraffe* is an exciting and informative monograph about one of the most extraordinary and bizarre of ungulates. which somehow seems all wrong with its outsize proportions and little head, 18 feet above the ground, surmounting a 'watch-tower' neck. Colonel Meinertzhagen once aptly described giraffes as 'appearing to be lame in all four legs, besides having their shoulders dislocated'. The author has done an astonishing measure of meticulous research to provide such a wealth of valuable detail in support of his hope that the book 'will help people to reach a better understanding of this unique animal', which he has surely done with this 'introduction to the literature, the history and the habits of the giraffe'.

He traces the story of the giraffe, which, beginning millions of years ago, has had a place in the primitive culture of Africa for at least 5000 years, at the same time dealing with a variety of interesting subjects including origins, primitive art, legend, early introductions to foreign countries as far afield as China, anatomy, physiology, habitat and habits; much that is remarkable and well-nigh incredible is revealed. Certainly it is not generally known that the first giraffe calf to be born in Europe was at the London Zoo in 1839, where up to 1892 seventeen had been born. The giraffe's sole relative, the strange, forest-dwelling okapi, rightly receives more than passing mention in a comprehensive appendix.

The illustrations and distribution maps of the giraffe and okapi, past (hypothetical) and present, are excellent.

The Leopard, a bulky tome of some 160,000 words is best judged from the author's own words - 'For the past ten years I have conformed to the orthodox form of presentation. This little book has been my first attempt at rebellion.' One shudders to contemplate the extent of a 'large' book. Certainly a tremendous amount of painstaking research has been expended in the compilation of this highly informative and almost encyclopaedic account, replete with a wealth of

detail, about one wild species. Amongst an astonishing diversity of subjects are – behaviour, captivity, distribution and description; enemies and food; history, habits, hunting and heraldry; man-eating and mythology; photography, superstitions and weapons. Eight appendices provide additional information, some seemingly superfluous, especially the lengthy dissertation on hunting with a pistol or hand-gun. What could have been a valuable text book has become tedious reading by the far too frequent resort to speculation and conjecture, as well as much unnecessary explanation; inevitably it is repetitive. Those familiar with the leopard in Africa and India may not accept some of the claims and theories. There are numerous spelling mistakes and some careless inaccuracies, for instance 'French Guinea' on p. 65 should be 'French Guiana', and 'Carl Aberley' on p. 197 (index ref. p. 196) should be 'Carl Akeley'. It is well illustrated, and particularly useful in the Index is the 'Leopard or Panther' section with its 179 specific items.

In conclusion, it seems appropriate – in view of his admitted 'rebellion' – to reproduce from a title page the author's quote from Kipling, perhaps recorded with his tongue in his cheek – 'What is this new folly, little dreamer of dreams.'

C. R. S. PITMAN

Birds and Wild Africa, by William Condry. Collins, 30s.

The author spent five months travelling in the country near the border of Zambia and Tanzania. The area holds a wide variety of habitats, from the low-flying Rukwa Valley only 2500 feet above sea-level, through *Brachystegia* woodland at mid-levels to highlands rising to over 8000 feet. He was able to draw on the experience of two well-known local naturalists, and it is evident from the bibliography that he has read widely. The result, written with a general ecological approach, makes excellent light reading. The final chapter deserves special attention. Stress is laid on the vastness, by European standards, of African relict wilderness areas which yet hang in a precarious balance – 'it only wants a few hostile decisions and, with the aid of modern science and technology, all could be irredeemably altered in a very few years'. Tribute is paid to the tsetse fly, which has prevented huge areas being taken over by domestic cattle. The author expresses his doubts about game management methods, even conservationists being ingenious at inventing excuses why they should interfere with nature. He fears that those in charge of wildlife areas may rush headlong into crash solutions of pressing problems, whereas it is only by careful study that satisfactory ways of coping with the problems of a reserve can become known. There are 30 photographs, all by the author, mostly of birds, a few of insects and plants.

C. W. BENSON

The Last of the Wild, by Eugen Schuhmacher. Collins, £4 4s.

In 1959 the author embarked on a seven-year wildlife photography tour of every continent, including Antarctica, and a number of islands, including New Guinea, Galapagos, and Spitzbergen, with the aim of 'arousing the interest of people of every nationality in the need for conservation measures'. This book, together with a film, is the result; and pretty stupendous it is. The photographs, $8\frac{1}{2}'' \times 10''$ all in full colour, are superb, many of them of the popular and well-known species – leopards, bears, flamingos, African elephants (three) lions (three) emperor penguins (three), but with a fair proportion too of the rare and the endangered – whooping cranes, leathery turtle, nyala, vicuña, and (triumph indeed) Javan rhino. This fell to the camera of his patient co-photographer (surprisingly not mentioned on the title page), Helmut Barth, who after two weeks' searching the Ujung Kulon reserve – a 'fabulously beautiful wilderness of rain forest' –