

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