

water supply, sewage disposal and pollution, methods of collecting and examining specimens, and a long book list for further reading. Throughout the author emphasises conservation aspects. Although this is not an identification manual, the abundance of good plates and line drawings – 16 colour plates, 46 half-tone plates and 88 text figures – will help readers to get to know the names of freshwater organisms.

An excellent introduction to freshwater biology for teachers and students in schools and colleges, the clarity of the text also makes this a very attractive book for the amateur naturalist, conservationist and angler. Its publication coincides with the Save The Village Pond Campaign for which it provides helpful background information on pond ecology. An excellent book with a wide appeal.

URSULA BOWEN

Conservation in the Soviet Union, by Philip R. Pryde. Cambridge University Press, £5.00

The author, who is Associate Professor of Geography at California State University at San Diego, and specially concerned with environmental problems in the Soviet Union, has compiled a detailed, balanced and lucid account of the policy and practice of conservation and its success and failure in the largest country on earth. The first survey in English – and admirably comprehensive – it embraces, for instance, history, legislation, administration, the extraction and conservation of timber and mineral resources, and environmental pollution. The 27 appendices include a list of endangered mammals and of proposed natural parks, texts of Soviet conservation laws and a table of the composition of Soviet forests. There is a laudably accurate index and a 31-page bibliography.

The author analyses the major problems – for example, enforcing the conservation legislation, stopping the widespread poaching and the bad water pollution – and praises both the conservation education and the work of the *zapovedniki*, the nature reserves, numbering 68 in 1966 and covering some 10.6 million acres. Specified by law as being ‘for scientific research and cultural-educational purposes’, almost all *zapovedniki* have their own research laboratories, scientific staff and museums. Many were created primarily to preserve some unique or threatened species of plant or animal life such as the fur seal and spotted deer.

No major species has apparently become extinct on Soviet territory since the tarpan was exterminated a century ago. And the species greatly depleted earlier this century (e.g. beaver, sable, saiga) have been helped to a strong recovery. One great success story, which the Russians share with the Poles, is that of the European bison, or wisent: only 48 existed in the world in 1927, but by 1965 a breeding programme in the USSR had achieved 231 full-blooded wisents and the number is now probably doubling every five years.

JOHN MASSEY STEWART

Wildlife Conservation, by H. J. Frith. Angus & Robertson, £8.00

Conservation is planned management of a natural resource and the need for careful but flexible, informed management is a recurrent theme of this timely book. Harry Frith, Chief of the CSIRO Division of Wildlife Research, has done his country a service in presenting this well-documented account with its emphasis on the importance of conserving habitats along with animals.

A concise description of Australia's vertebrate fauna is followed by one of the vegetation, the preferences of various animals for different habitats, the effects of land use and the alteration of habitats by grazing, clearing, mining, burning, water conservation and pollution. The size of Australia and the concentration of human population in a few places fosters what Frith's predecessor, the late Francis