

starts bush fires, and so forth ; as are also the comprehensive details about behaviour. The numerous figures depicting so clearly the variety of roosting places and the diverse, but characteristic, rest attitudes adopted by the various species are, too, of particular value.

The hours of activity of the different species ; the influence of habitat on feeding range ; whether insectivorous or frugivorous ; whether feeding in flight or the prey taken to a " perch " ; are among the many items discussed. The meticulous study of the methods of entry into and departure from roosting places, as well as the descriptions of the initial line of flight when emerging from a shelter make entertaining reading, as do the accounts of methods of capture, and the analysis of bat voice—diurnal and nocturnal, in the habitual roost, on the wing or at rest.

The wealth of detail with which this work has been compiled is well illustrated by the way each captured specimen had its rectal temperature taken, parasites collected, stomach contents examined, state of genital organs noted and measurements and weight recorded.

Although this is a highly scientific treatise much of the subject matter is not only of zoological interest but at the same time provides enjoyable reading.

C. R. S. P.

THE CRY OF THE FISH EAGLE (sub-title "The Personal Experiences of a Game Warden and his Wife in the Southern Sudan"). By PETER MOLLOY. 254 pp., 46 pp. illus., map. Michael Joseph, 21s.

Books about Africa continue to come off the production line so frequently that one wonders how it is possible to maintain the reader's interest in this well publicized subject. But, much more than just a thrilling animal story, this is a lively portrayal, in simple language and delightfully expressed, of the inhabitants—both human and wild—of a region so vast that in extent it equals the combined areas of France, Belgium, Holland, and Switzerland. It is a stirring tale of achievement and endeavour, an epic of six years of toil, sweat, blood, and tears ; as well as a valuable record of the ethnology of a little known region at a particularly interesting stage of tribal evolution. That Molloy made a success of an immense task is due to his sympathetic understanding of the African, which won for him the necessary confidence without which his efforts would have

been in vain. The untutored savage dependent on primitive methods has never been a threat to wild life, it is the weapon of precision in irresponsible hands and novel methods of destruction which constitute the real menace. The African savage hunts for necessity, the urge being protein deficiency ; it is the commercialization of game—whether for ivory, horn, hide, or meat—which is the danger. Not even tens of thousands of animals can for long stand systematic, relentless wastage. To understand the other man's—the native's—point of view is a maxim which Molloy fully appreciated. In particular, I commend to the notice of all protagonists of African wild life protection the chapter " In Defence of Native Hunting ", which is well-reasoned and convincing. The nature of some of the less sophisticated tribes and their relationship with the wild life of their tribal areas are skilfully depicted. With his limited resources, especially in man-power for control units, he never attempted the impossible. Laws are easy to make, but their enforcement may be a very different matter. Reasonable latitude, as the circumstances demand, can be the best and only policy. The nature of the country and its climate and the lack of roads—what there were being often untended tracks—restricted field work to the five months of dry weather. Game distribution showed a similar dependence on season, requisite being water supply and grazing ; at the right time in the right place there were vast concentrations of ungulates, with the usual attendant predators.

The ways of the wild creatures, the country, a variety of tribes—together with astonishing oddities in their behaviour strange to the white man but natural in the savage, quaint superstitions and hair-raising episodes are all picturesquely described. But sensationalism is avoided, though there are in fact a number of terrifying experiences made light of to such an extent that only those familiar with local conditions are aware how nearly tragedy was just avoided. These fit so unobtrusively into the story that they are almost immediately forgotten, and what are more likely to stick in one's memory are such entertaining tales as " drumming " for lung fish, the glimpse of a bongo, photographing the elusive giant eland and the wary Nile lechwe, or the " dead " crocodile which came to life on a Nile steamer. The absorbing interest of the narrative is apt to obscure the exceptional hardships and the dangers, and, let it be emphasized, to her lasting credit these were cheerfully shared by the author's wife. Only those who have first-hand experience of the desert, drought and blistering heat ;

of the dirt, innumerable pests and dangerous animals; can appreciate and will marvel at the indomitable courage and fortitude, and almost incredible endurance of Yvonne Molloy. For added companionship she always had with her a dachshund and a Siamese cat, which on occasion could provide some unexpected entertainment.

As part of his job, the author, ably assisted by his wife, had to keep a local zoo at his headquarters. From its medley of inmates they derived great pleasure, as well as gaining much knowledge, amongst the more interesting being a pair of young white rhinoceros, leopards, a porcupine and a caracal or African lynx. This review would not only be incomplete, but would be doing a grave injustice, without mention of Molloy's African staff; where would one be without these faithful retainers? Whatever may be the recorded testimony, it is certainly inadequate. One marvels, to put it mildly, at the uncanny skill of the African driver-mechanic Amtai who never let the party down and often with astonishing improvisations and in the most exacting conditions of well-nigh unbearable heat patiently coaxed a refractory engine into life or effected an essential, intricate repair. It is a relief to read that this paragon was one of those who escaped the consequences of the rebellion in the Southern Sudan, for complicity in which several of his faithful game scouts lost their lives.

The Sudanese now manage their own affairs and carry on from where the British Administration left off. Will the new rulers follow the policy bequeathed to them of wise wild life conservation supported by strict limitation of firearms? Only time will show.

But the dangers which lie ahead are well illustrated by the author's account of the illicit immunization of horses with stolen antrycide thereby enabling ruthless hunting to be carried out in areas hitherto protected by the presence of the tsetse fly. This could easily and speedily lead to the extermination of that inoffensive, beautiful creature, the giant or Lord Derby's eland.

The book is well-illustrated with many wonderful pictures; mere photos are easy enough to take, but to obtain a good picture is an accomplishment which only the few achieve, but the author is one of them. Outstanding is Yvonne's frieze of the elusive Nile lechwe or Mrs. Gray's waterbuck, a fitting finale to innumerable disappointments. But there are so many of the highest excellence that it is difficult to pick on those deserving special mention, though particularly attractive are: "Dinka fishing at Nyamlel," "Interrupted bather" (bull

elephant), "Cow elephant," "Giraffe in a bow trap," "Male giant eland," "Baby white rhinoceros feeding," and "Kutsi—a caracal." Those of native subjects are one and all especially good.

Recommended by the Book Society, and with a delightful title, it is a remarkable book for which the author is to be heartily congratulated.

C. R. S. P.