

species mentioned, in the best collection of its sort I have seen. M. Dandelot has the gift of portraying the authentic facial expression, which makes his animals live. Even the mongooses (surely the acid test) look like mongooses, and the Felidae are superb. Though correctly described in the text, both the steenbok and Sharpe's grysbok are depicted with false hooves, an unfortunate slip.

This excellent book can be recommended to everyone with an interest in African mammals, professional as well as amateur.

W. F. R. ANSELL

**Australia's National Parks**, by Vincent Serventy. Angus and Robertson, 85s.

In *A Continent in Danger*, published in 1966, Vincent Serventy warned that many of Australia's unique plants and animals might be threatened with extinction, and in this latest work he repeats his warning. But he also gives a cheering account of the progress made in the conservation of at least a representative series of habitats, with their natural plant and animal communities, in parks and reserves 'where all things of nature are protected'. Royal National Park, near Sydney, the first national park in Australia, and the second in the world, was established in 1879. 'Today there are many national parks and reserves throughout the country—and more are being declared each year'. Of these he has selected 181 to give an overall picture of Australia's native flora and fauna. The descriptions, done with admirable clarity and interest, bring out each reserve's special aspect or task, and the text is interwoven with magnificent illustrations: 32 full-page colour photographs, 64 pages of black and white.

Some Australian parks and reserves are very large. The South-west National Park in Tasmania, for example, embraces approximately 1,600,000 acres. The conservationist might prefer to have a much smaller area with more assurance about the plans for its long-term maintenance; management, a matter to which Serventy makes little reference, may be essential to achieve the 'special task' of a reserve. Even in Australia, because 'each year millions of acres of bushland are destroyed . . . marshes are drained . . . rivers are dammed', the largest reserves may prove ecologically unstable and subject to dynamic change if left to themselves.

This account of Australian flora and fauna, and their natural habitats, is a valuable contribution to the conservation literature; it is no less enjoyable reading—and viewing—for any reader with an interest in a lovely country. Whether one has had the good fortune to have seen some of these unique plants and animals amid their native scenery, or whether the book itself introduces them for the first time, the interest and pleasure it will give can be assured.

JOHN BERRY

**Since Silent Spring**, by Frank Graham Jnr. Hamish Hamilton, 40s.

*Silent Spring* was a skilful advocacy of the case that the indiscriminate use of pesticides has had undesirable and damaging effects on organisms other than target species. Mr Graham begins with an interesting biographical sketch of the late Rachel Carson, and gives the background to her book which so severely rocked the agro-chemical boat. His own book follows in the same vein, and again deals largely with the situation in the United States, but includes relevant details drawn from other countries. The more recent scientific evidence supporting Miss Carson's case is marshalled, and in particular that showing the harmful effects of persistent organochlorine compounds on the populations and reproductive biology