

as above, *Nephtys*, and the correct one of *Nephtys* in the space of a few pages.

CHRIS TYDEMAN

The Trees of Britain and Northern Europe, by Alan Mitchell and John Wilkinson. Collins Pocket Guides, £6.95 hardback, £3.95 paperback.

Alan Mitchell has been described as 'the great tree connoisseur of our generation; the Evelyn, the Gilpin or the Elwes of the mid-20th century'. Certainly his other excellent work on trees, the Collins *Field Guide to the Trees of Britain and Northern Europe* which appeared in 1974, has become almost a 'standard work'. The new *Pocket Guide* has the same dimensions as the *Field Guide* but is in other respects quite different. It is clear, concise, and only marginally less comprehensive, covering over 600 species and varieties. But from its key to its overall presentation it is written in a more 'popular' style, clearly aimed at the enthusiastic beginner rather than the committed amateur. The whole book is in colour so that illustrations appear against the species descriptions – an improvement on the *Field Guide* – but the illustrations are less clear, and the descriptions shorter, more 'chatty' and without the systematic detail of its more scholarly sire.

The appeal of the new *Pocket Guide* is that – especially for the beginner – it is simple, accessible, and easy to use.

RICHARD CLARKE

The Oxford Book of Insects, by John Burton. Oxford University Press, pocket edition, £2.50 paperback.

Many readers of *Oryx* interested in British natural history will need no introduction to the *Oxford Book of Insects* and will welcome the new pocket edition – identical in all respects except size and soft cover. Inevitably the selection of about 800 of a possible 20,000 species is somewhat arbitrary. Thus almost all the British butterflies are shown, but only some 10 per cent of the more than 2000 moths. Nevertheless, enough examples are given to enable the user to recognize insect groups and there is a fair chance that any common specimen will be found illustrated. The plates and adjacent text will be sufficient to whet the appetite of even those for whom all insects are merely 'creepy crawlies'. Above all, the *Pocket Guide* is exactly what it says – small enough to slip into the pocket on a Sunday walk and, a small investment which will yield an immense return in interest, enjoyment, and awareness of what for many nature lovers is an 'unknown world'.

RICHARD CLARKE

The Falcons of the World, by Tom J. Cade (Collins, £15) deals only with the genus *Falco*, which includes such well known birds as the peregrine, gyrfalcon, kestrel and kestrel. The author is an expert on the peregrine, and accompanies R. David Digby's fine paintings with an excellent and comprehensive account of the natural history of each species.

Aves Brasilieras, Vol. 1, by Johan Dalgas Frisch (Editora Dalgas-Ecoltec Ltda, Rua de Consolacao 3095, CEP 01416, Sao Paulo SP, Brazil, \$29.95), when

completed, will be the nearest thing we have to that great desideratum, a field guide to the birds of South America. Although the text, in Portuguese, is a narrative rather than the usual species-by-species field-guide text, the illustrations stand by themselves and appear to be comprehensive.

The Breeding Birds of Europe 2: Sandgrouse to Crows: a photographic handbook, by **Mangred Pforr** and **Alfred Himbrunner** (Croom Helm, £17.95) is another variant on a well-worn theme, but a useful one. The large format allows for four colour photographs of each bird, often including one of the nest and eggs and others of various plumages. The text deals not with field characters, but habitat and other biological information, and there is a map for each species.

Birds of Fiji, Tonga and Samoa, by **Dick Watling** (Croom Helm, £25) partly fills one of the great gaps in the world's bird books, a comprehensive work of the Pacific islands. The illustrations by **Chloe Talbot-Kelly**, are first-class and some are of birds not shown in any other modern bird book. The text provides a great deal of information that is otherwise very hard to come by.

A Field Guide to the Birds of East Africa, by **John G. Williams** (Collins, £7.95) is the revised edition of a famous book, the first of the great modern array of field guides outside the European and North American heartlands. The illustrations, by **Norman Arlott**, are a great improvement on the originals, and the text has been updated too.

A Field Guide to the Mammals of Africa, including Madagascar, by **Theodor Haltenorth**, with colour plates by **Helmut Diller** (Collins, £8.95) has to be compared with **Dorst and Dandelot's Field Guide to the Large Mammals of Africa**. Despite the more ambitious title, its scope seems to be much the same, apart from adding seals and Madagascar. Neither book covers bats, even *Pteropus*, which one might be forgiven for thinking large. The text, however, is a great deal more comprehensive, and can therefore be recommended even to those who already possess the earlier book.

RICHARD FITTER

Publications

Gunung Mulu National Park, Sarawak, a management and development plan, by **J.A.R. Anderson, A.C. Jermy** and **The Earl of Cranbrook** (Royal Geographical Society, 1 Kensington Gore, London SW7 2AR, £6.00 including postage (UK)).

This national park covers one of the most outstanding areas of tropical rain-forest in South-East Asia. The plan resulted from the 1977–78 Royal Geographical Society/Sarawak Government Survey and contains a detailed account of the park with lists of vascular plants, vertebrates and selected invertebrates.

Chlorinated hydrocarbon pesticides and polychlorinated biphenyls in freshwater fishes in the United Kingdom 1980–1981, by **R.C. Hider, C.F. Mason** and **M.E. Bakaj**.

This report to the Vincent Wildlife Trust concludes that the levels of persistent pesticides discovered in fishes are unlikely to be adversely affecting otter populations at present. Free from ffPS – send large (220 × 160 mm) S.A.E. (12½p) or international reply coupon.