

described in the book perhaps the strangest of all are a pair of tuataras, reptiles found only on certain islands off New Zealand and given to Mr. Durrell by the New Zealand Government.

Only one chapter of *Menagerie Manor* made me a little uneasy. As a veterinarian I must deplore the author's "do it yourself" attitude to the sick animal. It is true that many veterinary surgeons are, by force of circumstances, inexperienced in the treatment of disease in captive wild animals, but they are nevertheless trained in the basic principles of diagnosis, and they know a great deal about the therapeutic use of modern drugs, the complexity and specificity of which increase almost daily. I should have thought that rare and valuable animals invariably deserve professional attention rather than an empirical dose of an antibiotic selected at random by a layman.

M. H. WOODFORD

The Private Life of the Rabbit, by R. M. Lockley. Deutsch, 22s. 6d.

This attractively-written account of the life history and social behaviour of a mammal for which many of us, despite its misdeeds, still harbour an affection, is largely based on the author's own observations and experiments at Orielton and on the island of Skokholm. Illustrated with one colour and eight monochrome plates and sixteen text figures, it describes in some detail the rabbit mating, breeding, fighting and feeding in different types of natural and artificial habitat. Features of particular interest, such as resorption, reingestion (coprophagy), and of course myxomatosis, are discussed. The history of the rabbit on Skokholm goes back at least to the early 14th-century, and the account of its history, of the author's efforts to get rid of it during his occupancy of the island, and the subsequent efforts by Sir Charles Martin and the Universities Federation for Animal Welfare, makes interesting reading. Much of the work described in the book, however, was carried out at Orielton on the Pembrokeshire mainland, during the 1950's.

The increasing interest in our British mammals, evidenced for example by the work of the Mammal Society of the British Isles, should ensure this book a wide circle of readers.

COLIN MATHESON

Reptiles and Amphibians, Their Care and Behaviour, by Zdenek Vogel. Studio Vista, 60s.

An ever-increasing number of people, both young and adult, keep reptiles and amphibians as pets or for study. This book, excellently translated from German by Dr. Gwynne Vevers, Curator of the Aquarium at the London Zoo, should meet the requirements of any herpetologist over the age of fifteen. It is, perhaps, unique in that it caters for both novices and more experienced workers alike; and in addition to giving advice on the care and welfare of the two groups, includes a great deal of the natural history of the species dealt with. The first half is devoted to the setting up of vivaria; the tools and accessories required for maintaining these; temperature and light; and the collecting of specimens. The second half describes the most suitable species, both hardy and exotic, and concludes with splendid chapters on food and feeding, and hints on health and first aid treatment.

Every student of reptiles and amphibians should have this beautifully produced volume, superbly illustrated with line drawings, numerous black and white photographs, and some equally fine colour plates, even though the price is high. The advanced worker will get full value in advice and up-to-date knowledge, and the beginner will have a reference book to last him all his life.

MAXWELL KNIGHT