

Unfortunately, the book opts for a romantic not a zoological portrait of the condor. Some of the pieces contradict each other over details, yet the overall rhetorical bias permits no space to opposing points of view. The world's captive-breeding successes, for instance, are given scanty analysis.

Despite the book's assertions to the contrary, rearing condors in captivity does not exclude preserving their habitat. That so many sincere conservationists should oppose the recovery team, however, may be a justified indictment of the high-handed conduct of the team's members if not of the principles of its programme. Though unsatisfactory as an answer to 'the condor question', the book is eloquent in warning against the triumph of 'science' over sensitivity.

STEPHEN MILLS

Vanishing Eagles. Illustrated by Trevor Boyer, written by Philip Burton. Rigby International Pty, London, £9.95.

People have long regarded eagles as regal birds, because of their large size, predatory habits, aloofness, and mystery, and because of the wild country they usually inhabit. Many have admired their beauty and power, and their almost effortless flight into the teeth of a gale. Others for generations have regarded them as enemies of their domestic stock or game, and have persecuted them remorselessly. The bald eagle is the national emblem of the United States, but is in danger of extinction. Indeed, eagles as a group are now more gravely threatened than ever in the past, by persecution, pollution from modern chemicals, and destruction of habitat for human development.

This book is timely, and puts this conservation message well. It also offers an accurate yet readable summary of information that is available only in more detailed form elsewhere. A small criticism is that Iceland does not appear on the map of distribution of the white-tailed eagle, nor Britain for the golden eagle despite Scotland's large population of golden eagles. The book contains a set of striking drawings and paintings by Trevor Boyer, first commissioned by Eagle Star Insurance. These make this book something of beauty and wonder, catching the grandeur of the world's eagles and wild places.

ADAM WATSON

Waders, by W.G. Hale. Collins New Naturalist, £9.50.

Estuary Birds of Britain and Ireland, by A. J. Prater, T. and A.D. Poyser, £14.

The first of these in Professor Hale's own words 'is a general and personal view of wading birds'. It is a fairly comprehensive review of the biology of waders, mostly British species, well up to the usual high standards of the New Naturalist series.

The second book presents the results of the BTO Birds of Estuaries Enquiry, dealing not only with waders but also ducks, geese, swans, divers, grebes and cormorants. It is in three parts: general estuarine biology and threats to estuaries; an account of estuaries on a regional basis; and an account of each species. It is an extremely useful and worthwhile document but sadly the results only apply up to 1975. I would have preferred to have had the results sooner without much of the dressing up of the earlier chapters. There are other sources for estuarine biology. There is one persistent mistake common to both books in the spelling of the scientific name for the catworm. The first book only uses *Nephtys* and is therefore consistently wrong. The second book uses three different spellings,