

Leslie H. Brown

Leslie H. Brown, who died at home in Karen, Kenya, on August 6 1980, was a practical conservationist of outstanding quality, and one of the most perspicacious natural historians of the century. Born at Coonor in Southern India in 1915 of Morayshire stock, his ties with Scotland were strengthened during his happy student days at St Andrews. The greater part of his life was spent far from his beloved crags and golden eagles, but they remained a principal source of inspiration which he revisited whenever he could. The honorary PhD bestowed on him by his old university 35 years after his graduation therefore gave him particular satisfaction.

A rugged and resourceful individualist, the sharpest barbs of his trenchant wit were reserved for those he deemed responsible for despoiling the beauty and variety of the natural world. His exceptional powers of observation and interpretation of what he saw were always permeated with a sense of excitement. Combined with a prodigious capacity for work, they enabled him to make a success both of his profession as an agriculturist and of his spare-time research and writing, which produced well over 30 major works in as many years, among them his outstanding pioneer study of flamingoes and numerous books on birds of prey, including the classic *Eagles, Hawks and Falcons of the World*, jointly with Dean Amadon, and graphic accounts of African ecosystems. He was for several years chairman of the East African Wildlife Society's Scientific Committee.

After his retirement in 1963 from the post of Chief Agriculturist of Kenya his services were much in demand by the World Bank and FAO. He was a good friend of FPS and a contributor to *Oryx*.

ffPS Annual General Meeting

The President, Lord Zuckerman, was in the chair at the Society's 76th Annual General Meeting, at which members voted to become the Fauna and Flora Preservation Society. Revised rules incorporating plant conservation were adopted, and two botanists elected to the Council. Five officers were re-elected, and the sixth, Acting Treasurer T.A.P. Walker, was elected Hon. Treasurer, succeeding Ian Malcolmson, who retired in 1979. Dr G.B. Corbet, Dr S.K. Eltringham, the Hon. Ivor Montagu and Dr John Owen retired from Council, and Dr David Bellamy, Dr David Chivers, Dr Alison Jolly, G. Ll. Lucas, Dr N.W. Moore and Lord Skelmersdale were elected to fill the vacancies and new seats. The Annual Report and Accounts were approved.

The speaker was the distinguished botanist, Professor V.H. Heywood of the University of Reading, who spoke about the formidable task of plant conservation. Professor Heywood showed why it was important to give priority to saving the flora of the tropics, where the risk to species is greatest and the rate of habitat loss already alarming, and where many species are still to be discovered and others have certainly been exterminated unknown. Extracts from his talk will be published in the next *Oryx*.

The Chairman, Sir Peter Scott, thanked the Zoological Society of London for much help throughout the year and especially for accommodation and services, and ffPS staff were also thanked for their work. After a wine and cheese supper, a film, *The Fig Tree*, was shown, and members were able to participate in a Zoo open evening.