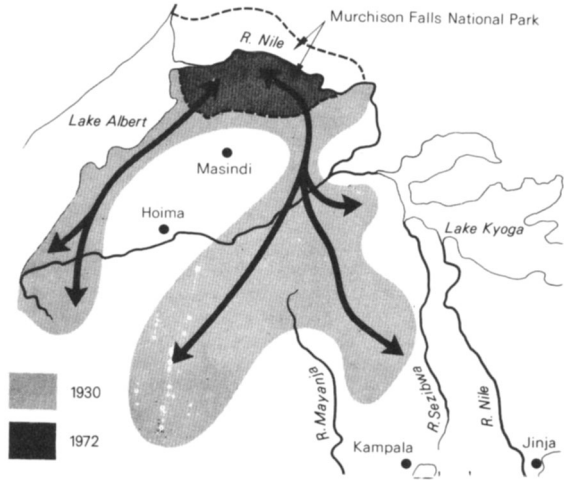


Map by Rennie Bere showing how the area available to elephants south of the Nile in Uganda has shrunk between 1930 and 1972. The arrows show their former regular migration which is now impossible.



*Mammals of East and Central Africa* by Rennie Bere (Longman, 75p) is a survey of the mammals in their wild habitats, arranged according to their feeding habits – herbivores, insect-eaters, omnivores, and carnivores. Every order and every family in the region is covered in 73 pages, ranging from elephants and lions to bats and shrews, with numerous illustrations, either black and white photographs or his own line drawings. The method highlights some of the conservation problems, as the author's graphic map, reproduced here, of the elephant problem in Uganda shows. A map of the region marks all the national parks and game reserves and there is a systematic list of the orders and families.

**Water Plants of the World**, by C. D. K. Cook *et al.* Dr W. Junk, D. Glds. 120.

Every genus of plants that normally spends at least two months of the year submerged in, or floating on freshwater is covered in this invaluable manual for all working on aquatic habitats, particularly in tropical regions and areas where good Floras are hard to come by. Many individual species are mentioned but, except for monotypic genera, specific descriptions are not given. The book is well illustrated with clear and attractive line drawings and has a valuable key to genera based on vegetative characters, an almost essential aid to the identification of most aquatic plants. Brief comments are made on ecology and any economic importance, and references given where appropriate to more detailed descriptions of the genera. This is not just a book for botanists, but for anyone who needs to name water plants, for whatever reason.

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## A Murmuration of Birds

Desmond Nethersole-Thompson adds to his reputation as our finest bird monographer with a fourth study to add to the greenshank, the dotterel and the snow bunting: *Pine Crossbills* (Poyser, £5), his name for the Scottish crossbill. As usual it is based on a lifetime of intensive field observation and makes fascinating reading. There are sixteen black and white photographic plates and a splendid painting in colour by George Lodge.

*Birds of Town and Suburb* (Collins, £3.50) is largely based on the fruits of Eric Simms's 24-year residence in the suburbs of north-west London, but he also ranges widely over other towns and suburbs in the British Isles to make an important study of this habitat which is so vital for birds in the modern world. The book is well illustrated in both colour and monochrome by nine leading bird photographers.

*The Buzzard* (David & Charles, £4.75) is a fine monograph by Colin R. Tubbs, the Nature Conservancy's New Forest expert, on Britain's largest common bird of prey. It is based on many years study in the field. Another excellent monograph on a British bird, Peter M. Driver's *In Search of the Eider* (Saturn, £3.75) is based on the author's field work during two expeditions to the Canadian Arctic and goes into behaviour problems in some detail.

*A Field Guide to the Nests, Eggs and Nestlings of British and European Birds*, by Colin Harrison, is a new Collins field guide at £3.50, which covers much ground not included in any other field guide, and will surely remain a standard work for many years. Philip Burton painted the attractive nestling plates.

Malcolm Ogilvie's *Ducks of Britain and Europe* (Poyser, £5) is a useful summary of knowledge, admirably illustrated by the author's wife. In a nice reversal of the usual practice, the flight pictures are in colour and the static in black and white.

*The RSPB Guide to British Birds* (Hamlyn, £1.50), by David Saunders, describes and illustrates the 218 commonest British birds, including such uncommon species as the golden eagle and the red kite and even the osprey and the snowy owl (the RSPB could hardly leave those out!). The neat colour and monochrome pictures are by Noel Cusa.

*The Birdwatchers' Puzzle Book*, by Tim Sharrock, with decorations by Robert Gillmor, will occupy many an odd half hour, and can be had from the author, 59 Curlew Crescent (how did he manage that address?), Bedford, for 95p.

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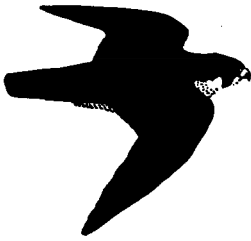
T.H. Coaker and R.W. Snaydon

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