

Field Guide of Whales and Dolphins, by W.F.J. Morzer Bruyns, Uitgeverij Tor, Amsterdam, US \$25.

I find this a fascinating book, as will anybody else who has been on a sea voyage and seen whales or dolphins without being able to name them. I count it a misfortune that it was awaiting my return from a visit to the Galapagos Islands, where I saw five kinds of cetacean; with its aid I would have been confident of identifying all five, instead of only three. Even at a distance of 6000 miles Captain Mörzer Bruyns has satisfied me that what I thought were Pacific white-sided dolphins - because they had a white blaze on the flank - were in fact killer whales, which also have a white blaze. Never from henceforth will I go on a sea voyage without this book.

Field identification of mammals has lagged a long way behind that of birds, and it has hitherto been impossible to find, let alone recommend, a book on how to identify whales. Captain Mörzer Bruyns, able amateur zoologist as well as sea captain of long experience, and twin brother to a distinguished Dutch professional zoologist, has very ably filled the bill. Yet there are still so many gaps in our knowledge that a revised edition will clearly be needed after he and others have done another ten years' field work.

The clue to the excellence of the book is the map on the end papers, showing the numerous long sea voyages the author has made over the past forty years, for eighteen of which he has been steadily accumulating the notes and sketches that have enabled him to illustrate 96 species of cetacean in colour and describe them in the text from personal observation. If professional zoologists disagree with some of his suggestions for classifying whales and dolphins, it will be up to them to do as much field work to disprove him.

RICHARD FITTER

Lost Leviathan, by F.D. Ommanney. Hutchinson, £3.00.

The Year of the Whale, by Victor B. Scheffer. Souvenir Press, £1.75.

Nearly fifty years ago the Discovery Committee began the studies at one of the whaling stations at South Georgia which laid the foundations of our knowledge of the life histories of the great whales hunted by twentieth century whalers. Dr Ommanney took part in this work and has now combined his recollections of those early days with an account of the whaling industry and of the biology of whales, especially those of commercial importance. Present-day assessments of the size and status of the various stocks of whales are still based on essentially the same routine of collecting observations and anatomical material as in his time. His vivid accounts of work on the whaling platform ashore and afloat, and of life on a whale catcher, therefore give an accurate picture of the pleasures and pains which lie behind the biologist's statistics of populations. Until the decline of the Norwegian Antarctic fleets in the

HUMPBACK WHALE - a drawing from the *Field Guide* reviewed above

