

wide a general knowledge of horses, but the proof-reading and transliterations are less good than they should be. Use is made, also, of several expressions confusing in English: 'diluvial' (for 'the diluvial age') is obscure in this context, and the alteration of the book's title itself surely does not exactly render the author's intention.

IVOR MONTAGU

Deer of the World, by G. Kenneth Whitehead. Constable, £5.

The author has collected together a considerable amount of information on the Cervidae from old books, long out of print, and from more recent publications, and presented this very successfully within the space of less than 200 pages. Unfortunately, in the virtual absence of references within the text, the reader will have difficulty with certain topics in determining where the old ends and the new begins. Geographical ranges appear generally to follow earlier rather than present distributions. Current ranges of deer such as the Chinese sika, swamp deer, and the fallow deer in Turkey occupy only a fraction of the areas shown on the maps. In fact, the Turkish fallow deer presently occurs outside the range depicted. Geographical limits of certain South American deer, on the other hand, are not wide enough. Both the marsh and pampas deer range well within Bolivia, the former actually reaching southern Peru. There is an extremely interesting review of the economic uses of deer, but the chapter on antlers might have provided greater interest for the general reader if it had included some data from recent behavioural studies on the use and function of antlers, at the expense of material on natural and induced abnormalities in antler growth.

There are some excellent plates, including a unique photograph of the shou (now possibly extinct). If Riddel's painting of the hangul is a reliable indicator, however, the plates of artists' impressions of deer probably bear little relationship to the living animals. The bibliography is largely confined to books and the more substantial monographs on Cervidae; one or two publications within this category have, rather surprisingly, been omitted.

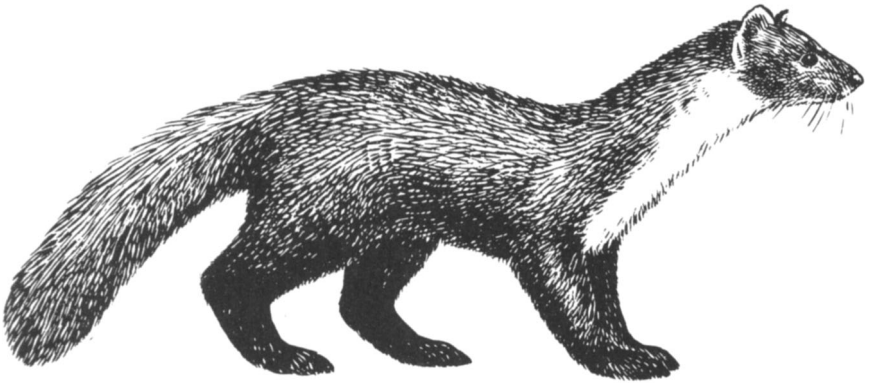
COLIN HOLLOWAY

The Leaping Hare, by George Ewart Evans and David Thomson. Faber, £3.50.

The title refers not only to the animal's physical leaping and springing but also to its association, in many languages and mythologies, with the springing up of life, the intuitive leaping mind and to spiritual and religious connotations.

Although sometimes gregarious, hares tend to be elusive, remote and solitary. They have been linked with mystery and magic, witchcraft and trickery, and, like the phoenix, have been a symbol of regeneration in a divine fire that cleanses and renews. In Chinese mythology 'the hare in the moon' was a resurrection symbol; in Indian legend it was a sacrificial animal, while it also figured in the folklore of the North American Indians and in Greek and Roman mythology. The authors, with their wide knowledge of rural beliefs of 50–100 years ago, have found many parallels in Britain. The reluctance of some countrymen to eat the hare, the taboo on its name among some Scottish fishermen, the hare-witch stories of Wales and Ireland, all support the belief that 'there is some sort of enchantment in the hare'.

The authors place great reliance on transcripts from tape-recordings and talks with countrymen, sometimes quoted to excess, but they have read widely and industriously and sought information and advice from many



PINE MARTEN, one of Britain's rarest mammals now found only in the west Highlands, the Lake District and Wales. This is one of Robert Gillmor's drawings in *Predatory Mammals of Britain*, a Code of Practice for their Management, a revised edition of which is published by the Council for Nature. The text is the responsibility of a working party representing conservationists (including FPS), farming and sporting organisations. A new companion booklet, *Predatory Birds in Britain* will be reviewed in the next *Oryx*. Both booklets are obtainable from the FPS, 40p each post paid.

naturalists and zoologists. They are scrupulous in acknowledging sources of information, but the use of footnotes, although convenient when reading a book, is less useful than a bibliography when checking a reference subsequently.

HARRY V. THOMPSON

Mountain Sheep: A study in Behaviour and Evolution, by Valerius Geist. Chicago University Press, £6.55.

The paradox of the mountain sheep is well illustrated by the cover picture of a large horned ram standing on a sparsely vegetated ridge. Why does a highly successful group, living on the fringes of the great ice sheets, waste resources in growing these magnificently decorative horns? Dr Geist answers this question and many more, so amply and eloquently, that his book will be a model for many years. It is rare indeed that meticulous field observation, stimulating ideas of considerable generality and good writing are combined to give a book of high scientific value and readability that is also informative and exciting.

Based on the intensive study of three races of North American sheep—Stone's sheep in British Columbia, the bighorn in the Banff National Park, and Dall's sheep in the Yukon, it is far more than an excellent account of a series of field studies, for it sets the behaviour of these three races in an evolutionary and ecological framework. To do this Dr Geist is not afraid to discuss other ungulates and there is a valuable account of the contrasting strategy of the moose.

The observations and hypotheses are contained in well constructed chapters, with a comprehensive introduction giving the main points, followed by detailed observation and analysis. This helps the busy reader, but I doubt if many will omit the high-quality field observations in the main parts of the chapters. Dr Geist sets up explicit behavioural and evolutionary