

# Book reviews

gascar, the South Pacific and other regions. Although the book mistakenly states that the Manus green snail is the only tropical snail in the *IUCN Invertebrate Red Data Book* (in fact a number are listed, and many more are included in the *IUCN Red List of Threatened Animals*), it does an invaluable job in identifying those areas of high endemism where landsnails are most at risk from loss of forest.

Brian Parkinson and his colleagues have provided a valuable tool for drawing attention to a group of species rapidly disappearing, as the world's conservationists talk about the importance of biological diversity. As the Brundtland Commission Report pointed out starkly 'the world is losing precisely those species about which it knows nothing or little; they are being lost in the remotest habitats'. *Tropical Landshells of the World* tells us a little more about some of these species and may prove a stimulus for some rapid action.  
*Sue Wells*

## Checklist of Fish and Invertebrates listed in the CITES Appendices

Patricia C. Almada-Villela (compiler) with contributions from N. Mark Collins, Tim Inskipp and Simon J. Moore  
Nature Conservancy Council, Peterborough, 1988, 82 pp., SB £11.00

This list of species and subspecies of fish and invertebrates included in all three appendices of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora gives scientific and English names, geographical range, references and the main form of exploitation for each. The lists are of course rather lopsided; only 17 fish are listed and of the invertebrates, swallowtail and bird-

wing butterflies, corals, tree snails and pearly mussels make up the bulk, with the red-kneed tarantula and the medicinal leech being the sole representatives of their classes. This volume departs from the convention established in other checklists of the same series, only listing species on the CITES appendices rather than all Red Data Species. So little is known about these vast taxonomic groups that there is little chance of evaluating the status of more than a tiny fraction.

## Fauna of Saudi Arabia

Prof. Dr W. Büttiker and Dr F. Krupp (editors)  
NCWCD Riyadh and Pro Entomologia, c/o Natural History Museum, Basel, Switzerland, Volume 9, 1988. 477 pp., price not given

As noted before in *Oryx* (22, 125) *Fauna of Saudi Arabia* is a tremendous attempt at documenting the diversity and abundance of animal life in the Kingdom. Volume 9 is another compendium on Arabian zoology contributed by an international network of biologists—a network that the *Fauna* has fostered. A bewildering record of the invertebrate fauna, based on new collections and re-examination of old specimens, includes about 30 species new to science. A special section devoted to conservation issues discusses protected area development and the problem of bird trapping along the Red Sea coast. The birds of Farasan, the Red Sea archipelago, are the subject of another paper, while yet another discusses the parasitic diseases caused by imported livestock.

What makes this volume special is a comprehensive treatise on the snakes of Arabia. Taxonomy and distribution of all the 55 species (in-

cluding subspecies) of terrestrial and marine snakes recorded from the Arabian peninsula are dealt with in detail. The essential aspects of snake biology are also discussed in the paper that occupies more than half of the volume. And firmly supported by data, the author J. Gasparetti—whose 40 years of study this paper is—gives a fascinating discussion of the zoogeography of Arabia.

The *Fauna of Saudi Arabia* is a result and cause of the new momentum gathered by conservation concern in the country. Together with the earlier landmark publication *Mammals of Arabia*, it forms the foundation of Arabian natural history. As the National Commission for Wildlife Conservation and Development (NCWCD) is making rapid progress in protecting the natural heritage of the Kingdom, the *Fauna* serves as a tool in developing appropriate perspectives and plans in enhancing the biodiversity as well as in stimulating studies beyond the realm of natural history.  
*S. Faizi, NCWCD, PO Box 61681, Riyadh 11575*

## Book service

All books reviewed in the Book review pages are available from the address below, except where we supply addresses from which to obtain publications directly. Payment should be made to the NHBS in the following ways: cheques money orders; Visa, Access or Diners' Cards. Please convert dollars at current rate. Please add 10 per cent to orders to cover postage and packing.

Oryx Review Service, Natural History Book Service, 2 Wills Road, Totnes, Devon TQ9 5XN. Telephone: (0803) 865913.