

special feature of the area. Similarly there is no attempt to use Pearsall's work on Esthwaite Water when describing the plants, though it is mentioned in the account of life in the water. Surely something could have been said about the adder which is always of interest to visitors, and the chapter on molluscs is quite inadequate. The book is beautifully illustrated with eight colour and 24 black-and-white plates, although the pictures of plants are below the standard expected today, and there is no scale to indicate size on any of the plates. But, in spite of minor criticisms, it fills a real need and should be bought by everyone interested in the natural history of the Lake District and the conservation of its wildlife.

J. E. LOUSLEY

Flowers of Europe, by Oleg Polunin. OUP, 84s.

To have the commoner flowers of Europe both described and illustrated in a single book will obviously make the amateur botanist's travels in Europe far more rewarding in future. Oleg Polunin's book, very well produced, and with a profusion of colour photographs, describes 1900 species in detail, and a further 700 by short notes.

The photographs are, for the most part, of very high quality, but, using the book in the field, mainly in Italy, I found them difficult to use as identification guides; paintings and drawings would have been of greater value. On the other hand the text is well-written and clear, and by using the keys for identification and the pictures for corroboration, the user should have little difficulty. Since the area covered is so large, and the book is intended to be a field guide, the author has had to be extremely selective in his choice of species (which is very good); even so the book is bulky for the purpose. On the other hand, since so many species are

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omitted, it can be a little difficult to know whether a plant which does not quite fit a description is a similar species, or a variable specimen of the species described.

Nevertheless, it is a most useful aid to the botanist in Europe, extremely attractive, and not expensive for what it is. ALASTAIR FITTER

The Domestication and Exploitation of Plants and Animals,
edited by **P. J. Ucko** and **G. W. Dimbleby**. Duckworth, £7 7s.

These proceedings of a meeting held at the Institute of Archaeology, London University, cover an enormous field; 48 papers on the origin of domestication and agriculture, the patterns of exploitation, consequent changes in vegetation both in the domestic and wild environments, and the origins of domestic animals including the horse, the ferret, the onager and of course cattle. The papers are of a very high standard, eminently readable, and are important for bringing together the ideas and evidence on the early origin of many of our foods.

The section on 'what we have done to the natural ecosystem' is of immense importance. With 3,000 million people now distributed in almost every corner of the earth, the room for manoeuvre is small, safety margins are slim, and we cannot afford to make mistakes. This book, on the whole, will stand as a landmark in orientating our thinking away from the status quo towards a realistic and dynamic approach to biology. My main criticisms are that we only see the beginning (but the subject is so vast that this criticism is really a compliment in so far as it asks for more), and that insufficient attention is paid to the exploitation of domestic animals; and the animals of the oceans, rivers and lakes are sadly omitted except in passing. However, the re-emphasis of the idea that we could develop new domestic animals to meet conditions where conventional techniques are impracticable is refreshing.

The book's price is a serious drawback because it would be particularly valuable to the younger generation of biologists. M. A. CRAWFORD

The World's Vanishing Animals, by **Cyril Littlewood**. Foulsham, 18s.

A twentieth-century Pied Piper, with a sense of humour, Cyril Littlewood, the founder and director of the Wildlife Youth Service (which is part of the British National Appeal of the World Wildlife Fund) is dedicated to the idea that one of the most effective ways of preaching the wildlife conservation gospel is to interest and inspire young people. As one privileged to become aware of his burning zeal and to help to launch his junior Noah's Ark in 1963, I have always been astounded at his ability to do three people's work. In 1969, a typical year, he gave 360 lectures, took young people on 35,200 visits, led 43 nature rambles and held ten Adventure Camps of an average duration of ten days. There are now 130,000 youngsters, the voters of tomorrow, who appreciate his efforts. Six Littlewoods could organise a children's crusade for wildlife which would put to shame some of the pachydermous procedures of councils and committees. In addition to all this he has written this excellent book 'for young people of all ages and those who feel that we must do everything possible to save the wildlife and wild places of the world now, before it is too late'. Familiar words, perhaps, but ones which inspire children to action. Well illustrated in colour by D. W. Ovenden, each species has a distribution map on a world projection; the text is factual and the price reasonable. IAN S. MACPHAIL