

kestrel, water shrew by kestrel and tawny owl; bank vole by the same two birds and by barn owl.

Seven species of bats only have been recorded and more attention to bats is needed. Within a twelve mile radius of Carlisle I have discovered that the common bat is by no means the pipistrelle, but the whiskered bat. In fact, no more than three pipistrelles out of many bats, have ever come to hand. The same part of the area has produced two examples of the long-eared bat which is also known for Westmorland by one specimen from Windermere, the first county record, and one from Mardale. There is a comparatively recent record of Natterer's bat from Alston in the Cumberland Pennines. The noctule has become common in this county in late years; it is now frequently to be seen in many places and not usually alone, in fact it regularly appears over my home garden in strong, direct flight. From deer to bats, this consideration of the land of mammals happily does not all run to a loss account.

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## REVIEW

**KINGDOM OF THE BEASTS.** Text by JULIAN HUXLEY. Photographs by W. Suschitzky. Thames and Hudson, London, 1956. Price 50s.

Nobody would question Dr. Huxley's eminence in the scientific world or Mr. Suschitzky's in the photographic. Here we have the ingredients of a good mixture and there has indeed been a happy blending between the work of the learned scientist and the artist in photography. Not only are the text and the illustrations each excellent, but the integration between them is complete.

Of course, if you are seeking a book on general natural history or even on mammals, for only mammals come into the *Kingdom of Beasts*, you will not find it here. The book is built around the photographs and though every "Order" except the *Cetacea* and the difficult *Dermoptera* has its representatives, and the scientific name of each animal mentioned is given, there is no further classification.

The book starts with a short general survey of mammals, including prehistoric mammals, prehistoric man, and evolution. Dr. Huxley expresses the opinion that the transcending importance of man's brain in recent evolution is due to all other lines of advance having reached their limit in the Pliocene epoch, perhaps five million years ago. Is it not possible or even likely

that it is merely man's mental limitations which prevent him foreseeing other lines of evolutionary advance? As George G. Simson writes in "The Meaning of Evolution", an intelligent being in the Jurassic or Cretaceous periods, without knowledge of what was to follow, would have had as much reason then, as we have now, to think that evolution had exhausted all possibilities.

The second section consists of notes on the animals. Both this and the preceding one are full of reliable, interesting and indeed exciting information, though in telling of the camel's water-storing stomach, the book runs counter to C. L. Boltz who, writing in *Discovery*, August, 1955, describes recent investigation of the physiology of the camel. Much will be new to most readers. How many will already know that, according to recent research, the whale's "blow" contains myriads of fatty droplets which, by absorbing the nitrogen inhaled by the whale before he dives, save him from the terrible diver's "bends"? How many will know that the Kodiak bear may be eleven feet high when standing upright, makes prodigious leaps when charging and is capable of great speed.

The three coloured and the 159 monochrome plates are beautiful. With what detail is every hair and prickle of the hedgehog shown; with what artistry does Mr. Suschitzky make his hippopotamus completely fill the page. Each portrait expresses exactly the animal's character, or at least what anthropomorphically we imagine the animal's character to be—except the kinkajou, who is really not so bad-tempered as Mr. Suschitzky makes him.

At this time of the year Christmas presents are already in mind. Give this book to the teenage boy or girl interested in animals.

C. L. B.