

evidence and assess the various explanations advanced. The Proceedings, edited by the organiser, provide not only much about this fascinating species and other menaced predators but an enthralling account of the field and laboratory work which finally led to the solution of a most complex ecological problem.

The volume includes the contributions by the international experts, with summaries of the resulting discussions, under the following main heads—history and habits of the peregrine; recent changes in peregrine numbers; population trends in other raptorial birds; behaviour and general ecology; population factors, including pathogens, predation, shooting and egg-collecting; and population dynamics with reference to the trends established. The final discussion showed that most of the participants in 1965 felt that the link with pesticides had been established, though a few remained unhappy that the precise mechanisms had not then been demonstrated. Fortunately, Hickey was able to include in his final pages details of later research which has clinched the matter. Briefly it has been shown that organochlorines can affect the hormones which regulate the mobilisation of calcium, thus leading to thinner eggshells (shown to have occurred since 1946, when DDT was introduced, in the peregrine, golden eagle and sparrowhawk in Britain, and in the peregrine, osprey and bald eagle in the United States) and so to egg-breaking and eating. The ecological case against the organochlorine insecticides is, Hickey concludes, essentially complete. There remains, for all of us, the wider question of how much longer we can tolerate the use, uncontrolled over wide areas of the world, of pollutants which can have such complex and insidious effects on living things.

STANLEY CRAMP

Wild Animals of Burma, by U. Tun Yin. Myamma Export Import Corporation, 1 Suli Pagoda Road, Rangoon.

The author of this book is one of that great band of naturalist civil-servants who have done so much to build up our knowledge of the mammals of Burma, a country which stretches from the glaciers on the Tibetan frontier in the north to the humid Mergui Archipelago in the south, with all the different genera and species that that extent implies. In his preface he modestly disclaims his own achievements and says that his book "is not intended to be a scientific treatise but a compilation of the accumulated experience of others over a prolonged period". What he has done is to collect and collate records and observations of most of those who have worked on the mammals of Burma from the early part of the 19th century to the present day with two objects in view: firstly, to draw attention to the wildlife of his country and secondly, to prepare a compendious summary of old records so that they are readily available for the use of future students. He does not cover all the mammals, concentrating on the larger, more obvious and perhaps to the general reader more interesting primates, carnivores, ungulates, squirrels, etc., in fact those of which accounts are most likely to encourage both government and people in Burma to take active steps to preserve their country's wildlife. Bearing in mind therefore the fact that it deals only with the squirrels and porcupines amongst the Rodents, and that the Insectivores and Bats are excluded altogether, this is a useful bibliography which should do much to stimulate that interest in natural history which is the author's main objective in producing this book.

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