

known anywhere (though breeding is presumably regular somewhere in the Orinoco river system). Yet the protection theoretically accorded to it is not fully effective; in some years poaching and disturbance can, and do, effectively prevent the birds from breeding at all. Jan Lindblad gives a vivid account of how he personally took a hand in improving the situation at least in one year; we must hope that the improvement lasts.

D. W. SNOW

A Contribution to the Ornithology of Zambia by C. W. Benson and M. P. Stuart Irwin. OUP, 50s.

In the course of preparation is a book, *The Birds of Zambia*, which will be the culmination of some 20 years' intensive study of the birds of Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia) by C. W. Benson, as well as elaborate follow-up and complete revision of a series of check lists of progressively increasing scope and value. This paper, published on behalf of the National Museums of Zambia, is an essential preliminary and supplement to that project, and its co-authors are unrivalled in their knowledge of ornithology in their respective territories either side of the Zambezi, besides both being indefatigable field workers. Though comprehensive on an individual basis, it is restricted to some 240 selected species and provides extensively important details which could not be conveniently included in the major work. It concentrates, too, mainly on western Zambia, and particularly Barotse, a region hitherto little documented, and besides including a wealth of additional information on distribution, ecology and breeding seasons, also discusses a variety of taxonomic problems. In conclusion, it is scarcely necessary to mention that it is of the high quality that one associates with the authors.

C. R. S. PITMAN

History of the Birds of the Cape Verde Islands by David A. Bannerman and W. Mary Bannerman. Oliver & Boyd, £6 6s.

When David Bannerman originally set out to write *The Birds of the Atlantic Islands*, of which this is volume IV, his declared intention was to do two volumes on the birds of the Canaries, Madeira and the Azores. The Canaries and Salvages volume appeared in 1963, but volume II he found necessary to split into two; in the third volume, on the Azores, he was helped by his wife, who has established an ornithological reputation in her own right. Now, again with her aid, he has added a fourth volume, to complete the oceanic islands in the tropical and sub-tropical parts of the north-eastern Atlantic. This maintains the high standards already set by the first three (two of which were reviewed in *ORYX* in April 1966 and December 1967), and contains much additional material of interest, going so far as to include an excellent chapter by Norman Riley, on the butterflies together with a colour plate. Indeed one third of the book's 458 pages is occupied by matter other than the normal systematic treatment. These additional delights include a fairly detailed account of the authors' journeys in the archipelago, and notes from the diary of the junior author. Some 34 birds are illustrated in fine colour plates by D. M. Reid-Henry and P. A. Clancy.

As with all oceanic islands the main interest of the Azores to the naturalist lies in the random selection of the avifauna of the nearest mainland which has both managed to reach them and succeeded in building up a viable population. They include two endemics, one of which, the Razo lark, has set taxonomists by the ears for many years in their attempts to determine its affinities – currently it has come to rest in *Alauda*, although Dr Bannerman is clearly not happy about the latest fashion. Some species notably the white-breasted cormorant, appear to have become extinct on the islands in recent years, but fortunately these do not