

A Guide to the Birds of South America, by Rodolphe Meyer de Schauensee. Livingston, Wynnewood, Pa, \$20.

The Curator of Birds at the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, who first gave us a fine guide to the 1556 birds of Colombia, has now used the same plan to cover the avifauna of the whole continent, all 2926 of them. This titanic effort, covering 470 pages, results in a book too heavy to take comfortably into the field, but which is nevertheless a 'must' for all resident or visiting ornithologists in any part of the continent. When I first went to Argentina in 1965 there was no available book in English, and I had to make copious notes on every bird I saw. This one will be particularly welcome to the participants in the *Oryx* tours to Argentina and Brazil scheduled for the next two winters.

The author only has room for brief details of description and range, but this is far more than we have had before for the birds of the whole continent within one pair of covers – his *Species of Birds of South America* had only names and distribution, like Peters. Each family has a useful key prefixed to it. Some 676 species are illustrated, mostly in colour and many for the first time, by John B. Quinn and Earl L. Poole, both admirably professional artists. The birds look alive, which is more than can be said for some field-guide illustrations.

RICHARD FITTER

Zoos Round the World

The Conservation section in the *International Zoo Yearbook* Volume 11, edited by Joe Lucas (Zoological Society of London, £7.75), comprises the world register for Pere David's deer and an account of the acclimatisation and domestication of eland at the Askanya-Nova Zoo in the Ukraine – a remarkable and well-known experiment that has been in continuous operation since 1892, during which time 461 animals have been bred. Today a free-grazing herd of 40 animals is managed as a milk herd in the care of one (mounted) herdsman.

The Education section includes an analysis of the comparative popularity of animals in zoos, by M. Surinova of Bratislava (monkeys head the popular list both in England and Czechoslovakia and snakes the unpopular one); an account by Mrs Cussington E. Blyth of the Los Angeles Zoo's remarkable education programme, in which 250 trained volunteers (all women) annually conduct 20,000 school children round the zoo in small groups, giving special treatment to each; and an interesting analysis of zoo visitors by Clyde A. Hill, of San Diego, in which he shows how, 'with just a little thought, each zoo, small, medium, or large, could show rarities, contribute to the overall programme of conservation, and raise the standard of zoos in general, by eliminating the chaos of exhibit common throughout the world'.

Bird Language

Signals for Survival, by Niko Tinbergen and Hugh Falkus, illustrated by Eric Ennion (OUP, £2.00) is a beautifully produced picture book, based on a prize-winning documentary film, which, by a telling combination of close-up photographs, colour-wash drawings and a brief succinct text, interprets the 'language' of lesser black-backed gulls in the breeding season.

The price of *Australian Lizards*, by Dr Robert Bustard, reviewed in the last issue, is \$A5.95, not £A5.95 as stated.