

## Mammals of the World

By E. P. Walker. 1975. Third edition. Edited by J. L. Paradiso. Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London. 1500 pp. \$43 for the two boxed volumes.

*Mammals of the World*, begun by Ernest P. Walker in 1933 and first published in 1964, has proven so popular that it has recently appeared in a third edition. For those who do not know this work, it is a two-volume, attractively boxed, 1500-page compendium of much that is known about Recent mammals with at least one page devoted to each order, one to each family, and one to each genus. Species are often discussed specifically under genus. The text deals with such information as distribution, habitat, coloration, anatomical details, reproduction, and habits.

Compared to the original volumes which have the same pagination, this 1975 edition has few changes in the text, even for mammals on which research has recently been carried out. There is no new information, for example on moose, beaver, narwhal, or Canadian deer. Apparently only if information was sent in to the Genera of Recent Mammals of the World project, sponsored latterly by the New York Zoological Society, as I sent some on the giraffe, was it incorporated into this new edition which was supervised by John L. Paradiso after the death of Walker in 1969. In the first edition a third volume contained references to research works on mammals on which the text was based. This volume has wisely been

omitted by Paradiso. References are soon outdated and can readily be retrieved from other sources such as *Biological Abstracts* and *Zoological Records*.

One way in which this edition is superior to its predecessors is in its pictures, all black and white, which occur on almost every page. Where in the first edition there were many blank spaces, these are now often filled with photographs. For example, there are two new photos of the mule deer, while those of the pronghorn and moose have been exchanged for better pictures. Where possible, drawings have been replaced by pictures of living animals, and there are fewer photographs of museum study skins and mounted ones to represent little-known species. Where taxonomically useful, photographs of skulls are presented.

This edition of *Mammals of the World* contains a few anomalies. For example, why has the African tree rat of 1964, *Colomys goslingi*, become the African water rat of 1975?

This work should be essential for every university library and for other professional libraries that have a zoological bias. The price, which I am sure is justified, will unfortunately prohibit many zoologists from buying it.

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## BOTANY

### Catkin Bearing Plants (Amentiferae) of British Columbia

By T. Christopher Brayshaw. 1976. British Columbia Provincial Museum, Occasional Paper Number 18. British Columbia Provincial Museum, Victoria. \$3.00.

This book is the latest in a series of contributions to the Flora of British Columbia published by the British Columbia Provincial Museum.

Dr. Brayshaw covers in his treatment the genera *Populus*, *Salix*, *Myrica*, *Alnus*, *Betula*, *Corylus*, and *Quercus* which are included in four families. Only two of these genera, *Salix* and *Betula*, contain a substantial number of species and *Salix* dominates the book with 43 species. The "Amentiferae," as the author recognizes, is not a natural group of families, but evidently they are dealt with here as a group in order to include these important families of deciduous trees and shrubs under a single cover. *Salix* and *Betula* are taxonomically very difficult plant genera and the

author is to be commended for his efforts to make these plants more understandable to serious amateurs, wildlife biologists and botanists alike.

The outstanding feature of this work is the excellent pen-and-ink illustrations done by the author himself. They are of high professional and artistic quality and aid in the recognition of the species in a way that few illustrations do. The only shortcoming of the illustrations is that the technique does not enable leaf pubescence to be well displayed and *Salix exigua* ssp. *exigua* and *S. commutata* do not come across as the hairy plants that they are. Also it seems that the illustration of *S. exigua* ssp. *melanopsis* (Figure 22) was based on a misidentification of a specimen of ssp. *interior* with blunt bracts.

In addition to the illustrations, detailed distribution maps are presented for each species. These maps very





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