

There have been many books on 'camping and woodcraft' since Kephart's classic of that name first appeared in 1916, but few of them show such breadth of experience as this volume does.

Rutstrum believes that there is no need to be uncomfortable in the wilderness. He describes how to use modern equipment to achieve comfort and real pleasure in the field. Although aware of all the classical techniques he is thoroughly practical in his praise of the aluminum canoe, the modern outboard motor and the flashlight as basic tools. He likes the fragrance of a spruce bough bed but achieves the desired effect by putting a few boughs near his air mattress on which he sleeps more comfortably after less preparatory work.

He discusses wilderness cooking by several methods and believes in a good well-balanced diet and a widely varied menu but shies away from such fads as foil cookery which he considers a novelty of limited use in real camping.

Rutstrum's experience is wide and his suggestions on camping in connection with summer travel on foot, and by horse, canoe, and auto, as well as on winter travel and camping, are the result of many first-hand tests under field conditions. His chapters on location finding and survival, if carefully followed, would do much to lessen the annual toll of lost hunters and fishermen. His suggested use of easily caught minnows as readily available survival food deserves careful attention. He also suggests the use of a light weight gill net for taking larger fish under emergency conditions.

The author's section on the use of the aluminum canoe for travel on ice and water at break-up and freeze-up times is the first published reference to that new art that has come to this reviewer's attention. His suggestion, however, of using an outboard motor, in reverse, to slow downstream travel through rapids may lead to damage of both motor and boat if an obstruction is encountered since in reverse the motor cannot tip up to pass over the obstruction.

In some sections of the book, inexperienced readers may wish for a little more detailed explanation of items that are treated well but briefly. Experienced campers will not agree with all of the author's suggestions. A great wealth of useful information is compressed into the 272-page text. While much of this is well suited to the needs of the user of modern well-equipped campgrounds, it will be of even greater value to the real wilderness traveler.

Typographical and factual errors are few; the type though small is easily read. The book will find its place in many campers' libraries where its value will increase with familiarity. The author has performed a great service to the growing number of outdoor enthusiasts.

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The Snakes of Ontario

By E. B. S. LOGIER. Toronto, Univ. of Toronto Press [1958]. 94 p., illus. \$4.95.

This book was written expressly for children because, as Mr. Logier observes in his introduction, "it has long been apparent that any attempt to educate the public into reasonable thinking about snakes, if it is to be successful, must start with the children, whose minds are still open to receive the truth." However, it will also serve as a valuable reference for adult naturalists throughout eastern Canada for the snake species treated also occur in Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.

The book contains a wealth of information and the organization and presentation are excellent. There are twenty pages devoted to such topics as feeding, reproduction, hibernation, usefulness of snakes and other related subjects. Pages 23 to 62 present a description of Ontario's sixteen species of snakes. The account of each species is neatly limited to two facing pages, and includes an illustration of the animal, a small map depicting its entire range in North America and a detailed one showing its distribution in Ontario.

The accompanying and carefully prepared text covers the size and structure, color, habits and habitat, and distribution of snakes in Ontario. Except for two photographs of rattlesnakes, all the illustrations, both color and black-and-white, are from Mr. Logier's own brush and drawing board. For clarity and detail these drawings surpass the hazy photographic reproductions so often seen in books about snakes.

The titles of the eight appendices are as follows: Synoptic List of Ontario Snakes, The Scientific Name, Key to Ontario Snakes, Determination of Sex, Keeping Snakes as Pets, Collecting and Preserving of Specimens, Glossary and Rattlesnake Bite. The last appendix should be read by children, parents, and doctors alike. Mr. Logier has condensed this subject into an authoritative 11-page treatise on rattlesnake bite. One reading of the gruesome developments which follow rattlesnake bite should convince readers that one should learn to recognize rattlesnakes and leave them alone. All cases of fatalities in Canada have been due to persons who deliberately attempted to handle a rattlesnake.

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The BBC Naturalist

Edited by DESMOND HAWKINS. London, Rathbone Books, 1957. 93 p., illus. \$2.50.

This little volume is not at all a scientific work. It roams over a wide field without being either thorough or inclusive. What it does present (and very successfully) is the scientific naturalist being popular—not always an engaging sight. The book is a sort of distillation of the wonderful "Naturalist" broadcasts the BBC has been doing with unex-

pectedly great success. A point of view does emerge: an attitude combining respect for scientific thoroughness with pure human delight.

The approach varies with the authors of the brief contributions, starting with Peter Scott's thoughts on the painting of birds and ending with a half page by Field Marshal Lord Alanbrooke on some waders he saw. Between are equally diverse items. James Fisher has a report on the great avian crime wave in Britain which outlines a painstaking and prolonged detective job. The guilt of the tits, great and small, is beyond doubt in this mounting series of milk thefts. Feathered Fagins have been spreading the technique of prying off bottle tops for a couple of decades. In contrast is Frances Pitt's frankly sentimental account of her furred and feathered friends, she being one of those people who invariably have squirrels poking through their pockets.

The illustrations, photographs in both color and black and white, are numerous; in fact they are half the book in both space and interest. They are outstandingly good, considered as photography, printing, art or scientific record. Like the text, they are selected examples rather than a series bringing evidence to support a theory.

Most of the creatures considered are, naturally, British and do not occur in Canada. The methods of observation will be news to no Canadian naturalist, but I think many an observer in this country will enjoy an unusual and pleasant sense of kinship with his English colleagues.

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