

## Animals and Habitat

**Living Amphibians of the World.** Doris M. Cochran. Doubleday, Garden City, N.Y., 1961. 199 pp. Illus. \$12.50.

**Doubleday Pictorial Library of Nature.** Earth, plants, and animals. Josephine Perry, Ed. Doubleday, Garden City, N.Y., 1961. 363 pp. Illus. \$9.95.

These handsomely printed, lavishly illustrated books complete their respective seven- and two-volume series. Both are intended for an international audience of youngsters and oldsters who wish to counteract the trend toward extreme specialization by considering the natural world as a living, dynamic whole. The volume on amphibians is concerned with closely related topics and consequently shows fuller coverage and permits a chattier style. The volume on earth, plants, and animals is necessarily more encyclopedic in organization, and it often relies upon the sort of coordination and more informed reading a parent can give in achieving a satisfying explanation from the use of illustrations and text. The two books complement one another and seldom overlap.

Doris Cochran's book, like others in the "World of Nature Series," follows an inconspicuous taxonomic framework to introduce lively accounts of both the commonly encountered and the more unusual members of each amphibian family. It indicates where in the world they are found and how they fit their particular habitats. Abundant color plates of very high quality add to the appreciation. Readers can use the book for repeated reference, via its good index, or they can enjoy reading page after page, sharing the author's enthusiasm for her subjects. Pertinent comments are included on the role of amphibians in the food webs and on ways to keep amphibians under continued observation as pets. A need for further information is emphasized in many places; perhaps this will lead to fresh field observations in various parts of the world.

The book edited by Josephine Perry neatly gets the universe into shape; establishes the earth; populates it with life; modifies it through volcanic, mountain-building, and erosive action; and then accounts for the formation of almost everything from subterranean anthracite to coral atolls in 48 pages—surely a record for despatch! Biology is well integrated in the following 240

pages, followed by a 28-page taxonomic summary of the plant and animal kingdoms and a 14-page glossary. Particularly full coverage is accorded evolution, animal behavior, biogeography, and the development of human culture. The style varies somewhat from subject to subject, reflecting differences among the nine contributing authors. But always the material reads easily and is extraordinarily informative for so brief a presentation. Most of the topics are tailored to fit on one or two facing pages, under a helpful subhead.

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## Tribute to Jeffreys

**The Earth Today.** A. H. Cook and T. F. Gaskell, Eds. Royal Astronomical Society, London, 1961 (order from Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh; Interscience, New York). xii + 404 pp. Illus. \$13.

*The Earth Today*, a special issue of the *Geophysical Journal* (vol. 4) dedicated to Sir Harold Jeffreys on the occasion of his 70th birthday, contains a statement by the editors, an appreciation of Jeffreys' work by Robert Stoneley, and 27 papers by an international group of contributors. It is especially appropriate that the editors of the *Journal* have honored Jeffreys in this way; the *Geophysical Journal* is the successor to the *Geophysical Supplement* of the Royal Astronomical Society, of which Jeffreys was for many years editor and one of the principal luminaries. In both phases this journal is rightly recognized as the outstanding journal of theoretical geophysics.

As the title suggests, this volume is intended to contain the latest discussions of topics covered in Jeffreys' great book, *The Earth*, now in its fourth edition (1959). Five papers deal with aspects of gravitation and geodesy, including the derivation of the Earth's potential from observation of satellite orbits; 12 are concerned with seismology and global oscillations; three with thermal matters, including new data on heat flow in the Atlantic. Virtually all of the topics have at one time or other been the subject of investigation by Jeffreys himself. The present intense activity in geophysics is demonstrated

by the ease with which this and other special volumes, such as those dedicated to Vening Meinesz and Gutenberg, have been filled with new articles, with no visible reduction in the rate of expansion of the regular journals and reviews.

Aside from the common subject, however, nothing could be less like *The Earth* than *The Earth Today*. Jeffreys' treatise, with its various revisions, has provided a coherent synthesis of a large fraction of geophysical theory and fact, sifted by a single intellect, and presented with a consistent point of view; in large measure, this was possible only because Jeffreys had made original contributions in every subject treated in *The Earth*. It is a book in which the impress of Jeffreys' mind and personality appears on every page. Thus it differs radically from the undigested compilations of bits and pieces so often found between hard covers as well as from the individual research papers collected here.

*The Earth Today* is about the same size as the fourth edition of *The Earth*, but it represents a small part of this year's publication in the relevant topics. One can only wonder whether Jeffreys' feat of synthesis can ever be repeated with the same success.

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## Tropical Flora

**Native Orchids of Trinidad and Tobago.**

Richard Evans Schultes. Pergamon, New York, 1960. x + 275 pp. Illus. \$15.

*The Native Orchids of Trinidad and Tobago* is a part of a series on the flora of the colony which is being published family by family. The Orchidaceae on the two islands, represented by 181 species distributed among 66 genera, is the second largest family represented in the flora; it is slightly surpassed by the Gramineae with 183 species. In this colony, as in other areas of tropical America, the orchids have attracted several devoted amateur collectors and growers over the years and, for this reason, may be better known and more thoroughly collected, relatively, than the grasses.

The volume is divided into two parts. Three short chapters cover general con-