up with the trappings of wealth (and therefore becoming more than a bit off-putting for that vast majority, including me and most of you, who didn't). Its level of insignificant detail, clouding and obscuring generalities in the manner of the worst descriptive monograph in taxonomy, reminded me of the classical genre of the retired English vicar: the comprehensive history of his parish.

I am interested in Walter Rothschild, his life and his works, but I do not care about the tea parties and social graces of every fourth cousin. I would even have waded through these details with equanimity if the important personal insights needed for understanding the man had been dispersed among them. But Miriam Rothschild is a dutiful niece, silent or impenetratingly discreet just when it really matters—and you will learn next to nothing about the suicide of Walter's brother and fellow zoologist, about his personal life with women, or about the persistent blackmail that clouded his life and eventually led to the sale of his beloved bird collection (now in New York).

For those (that is, nearly all of us) who grew up in ordinary circumstances, Miriam Rothschild's pervasive assumption that wealth is a natural state and upbringing provokes both offense and amusement. Thus, for example, she speaks of her unfortunate sister-in-law, who grew up "as poor as the proverbial church mice," as proved by the deprivation that her father could only provide an allowance of £50 per year (an amount that I could never hope to reach at the prevailing rate of 2¢ per returned pop bottle). I was particularly amused by the silliest *ad hoc* argument for biological determinism that I have ever read. Miriam Rothschild traces interest in animals through the Rothschild pedigree, notes the rarity of such a trait among "Jews in the ghetto, virtually isolated from wild life for a thousand years," then assumes that this supposed trait results from a single gene and that Walter and his brother Charles received it either as "odd mutations—or perhaps the expression of a recessive gene due to the double first cousin marriage of their parents." Many of the Rothschilds loved animals, and Miriam therefore concludes that the genealogy "must convince the most skeptical environmentalist that an interest in animals and plants was probably an hereditary character." I don't know. As I scan the genealogy, one property is even more widespread, and I doubt that anyone would care to postulate a specific gene for it: great wealth.

Walter Rothschild was a big man who made a big difference. He had courage and means to do just as he liked. He lucked into the second, but controlled the first. The world survived with one less banker; it is far richer for a million more butterflies.

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Endangered Primates

The Barbary Macaque. A Case Study in Conservation. JOHN E. FA, Ed. Plenum, New York, 1984. xviii, 369 pp., illus. $49.50. Based on a conference, Gibraltar, June 1982.

The genesis of this volume was a conference on the status of both wild and managed populations of the Barbary macaque (*Macaca sylvanus*), a vulnerable species once widespread in Europe and North Africa but today reduced to relatively small and disjunct forest pockets in Morocco and Algeria. The effects of human interference on the Barbary macaques maintained by the British Army on Gibraltar, site of the conference, prompted John Fa, both a primatologist and a Gibraltarian, to organize the conference.

The book represents a dual approach to species conservation in that protection of wild populations and their habitats and captive propagation (ultimately for reintroduction to the wild) are viewed as complementary. Elsewhere the extent to which conservation moneys should be diverted from habitat protection to captive breeding remains a topic of debate. The Barbary macaque is identified as one of only three primate species with potentially viable captive populations. Three tourist parks with large enclosures have been established for the species in France and Germany, and in 1980 over 200 macaques from the two French parks were reintroduced into Morocco. No details are provided in the present volume that would bear on the debate over captive propagation, however.

Part 1 contains six chapters that define the status of the Barbary macaque in the wild, including a 4000-year historical survey of the human contribution to the decline of the fragile Mediterranean forest ecosystems in North Africa and examinations of the current pressures exerted on forests by grazing livestock and the way in which human overuse of a forest ecosystem can lead to overt conflict between humans and macaqu Such factors prove important in rank Barbary macaque habitats according priority for conservation.

Part 2 contains five chapters that amine the genetic, social, and envir mental factors necessary for self-susta ing populations of Barbary macaques zoos and semi-natural environments, cluding Gibraltar. The book conclu with a series of recommendations conservation action largely derived fr those formulated at the Gibraltar conf ence.

Some general conclusions reached the book include the following: (i) C servation efforts should be maximized protecting populations in less disturb and larger areas, rather than protect all known populations irrespective their viability (a "triage system"), though marginal populations in uniq ecosystems may receive priority rank to facilitate determination of the limits a species' behavioral plasticity. (ii) P ulations of threatened monkeys gener ed in captivity should not be establish as a source of laboratory animals sir such use could become a potential thr to wild monkeys, especially if the c tive populations were to decline. (iii) be successful, species and habitat c servation must be integrated with p grams of socioeconomic developm for human populations.

The holistic approach taken in t book to the situation of the Barb macaque may well serve as a model studies of other threatened species a their ecosystems.

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Island Biota

Biogeography and Ecology of the Seyche Islands. D. R. STODDART, Ed. Junk, T Hague, 1984 (U.S. distributor, Kluwer B ton, Hingham, Mass.). xii, 691 pp., ill $115. Monographiae Biologicae, vol. 55.

The Seychelles Republic consists o unique and complex group of islands the western Indian Ocean. They are v small and isolated both from each ot and from major land masses. Three e logical types are represented: gran islands, low sand cays, and elevated r limestones. The granitic group consi of some 40 islands rising from the S chelles Bank, where depths are less t 60 meters. Low sand cays on sea-le