

BOOK REVIEWS

The Land and Wildlife.—By Edward H. Graham. xiii 232 pp. 32 plates. 1947. Oxford University Press, New York.

The regeneration of a country's wildlife resources depends on the development of a land use policy that allows for the provision of suitable habitats. The logic of this apparently simple ecological principle has only recently been appreciated. Early in the days of settlement a scarcity of the food — and fur — producing animals near at hand brought forth regulations restricting the "take" of game. Predators, of course, were blamed and bounties were placed on them. Later on when it was apparent that many species might become extinct, large tracts of the public land, usually in remote areas and often not ideal for the species concerned, were closed off as refuges. This halted the decline of some, but others, even when supplied with additional food, continued to dwindle. The program advocated to-day is more indirect. The environment must first be built up. When shelter and food is provided, the way in which fur-bearers, game birds and fish respond is truly remarkable.

Various categories of land require different management and the wildlife crop will differ accordingly. Marshes and swamps produce a crop of muskrats and water fowl when water-levels are adjusted, ditches opened-up and food plants established. The impounding of surface waters and the fertilization of the pools so formed is a conservation measure already paying off in fish and soil saving. Reclamation works on gullies, on eroding and depositing water courses, mine dumps and rock piles repay with an added dividend if planned to encourage wild animals and birds. The "principle of the edge" is as important in hedgerows and wind-breaks as it is in swamp-ditches and margins of streams and ponds. The increase in the wildlife population bears a definite relationship to the extent of such borders where two types of vegetation-cover come side-by-side.

The conservationist must be aware of the interests of others that may conflict with his and must be ready to make a compromise.

Swamps breed mosquitoes and tie up potential crop land, river courses are economical repositories of municipal and industrial wastes, hedge-rows occupy valuable space and harbour predators which attack the farmer's poultry and stock or despoil his crops and orchards. Under a carefully arranged plan for land use, there remains plenty of space not profitable for use in some such manner and in many cases it will be found that if the environment provides wild creatures with suitable homes, they are likely to find it less desirable to forage in the places men usually frequent.

This book, by the Chief of the Biology Division, Soil Conservation Service, United States Department of Agriculture, is not a manual of wildlife methods. It is rather a sound discussion of the need, the cost and the return of wildlife practices written in a convincing and readable fashion. The 69 photographic illustrations are well selected to cover the various aspects of the topic, in many cases giving the "before and after" picture of undertakings. The majority of the 150 references are to recent publications and reports and indicate the current consciousness of wildlife conservation. A descriptive sentence or two describes the contents of each publication cited.—W. G. Dore.

Handbook of the Trees of the Northern States and Canada east of the Rocky Mountains. By Romeyn Beck Hough. MacMillan Company, New York 1947, pp. 470, with 479 photographs, \$5.50.

This handbook aims to include "The native and naturalized trees of North America lying north of the northern boundaries of North Carolina, Tennessee, Arkansas and Oklahoma and east of the Rocky Mountains, and extending southward in the Appalachian region to northern Alabama and Georgia". On pp. 1-417 are described 200 odd species of trees; of each is given a full-page illustration showing foliage, twigs and fruits; also there are photographs of live trees showing bark, and enlarged cross-sections of the wood. Besides, there are most useful notes on the texture, weight and use of the wood of most species. On pages 418-457 is a convenient synopsis of the species with analytical keys. At the end



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