

ence may be made either to waterfowl species or plant species, according to the interest of the reader. Keys for the identification of families, genera and species are provided: in some cases, seeds may be identified with the aid of the keys. For each group of plants there are notes on propagation, distribution (there are also some specific distribution maps) and utilization by waterfowl. The line drawings depicting plants and seeds are of excellent quality and definition, although their usefulness is somewhat reduced by the lack of any reference to scale in habit sketches and detail drawings of vegetative parts. The scale of seed drawings is clearly indicated. A useful feature is the separate index referring to plants. — **DAVID A. MUNRO**, Canadian Wildlife Service, Department of Zoology, University of British Columbia, Vancouver.

**The Unvanquished Buffalo.** By Henry H. Collins, Jr., Blue Heron Press, Box 236, Bronxville, N.Y. Price 25 cents.

Much has been written about the history of the North American Buffalo or Bison but few accounts are as complete and authentic as that contained in this booklet. In brief, it is the story of the bison from the time of the early settlers, when sixty million roamed the plains, up to the present day. Not only are the factors responsible for the decline of this magnificent animal discussed in considerable detail, but also such topics as past and present ranges, migration routes, food habits, breeding and herding behaviour, enemies, etc.

A perusal of the various chapter headings give some indication of the scope of the treatment: Physical Characteristics, Family Life, Natural Enemies, Pioneers and the Buffalo, The Incredible Multitude, The Buffalo and the Indian, The Great Slaughter, The Buffalo in Canada, etc. Particular emphasis is placed on the factors responsible for the rapid decline of a species which is believed to have once attained a density greater than that of any other large mammal in the world.

The author cites a number of incidents in this epic of wholesale slaughter which seem almost incredible. For example, one man alone killed 4,280 in 18 months to supply a construction camp, and 500 were killed in a single hour by a small group out for a day's "fun". Little wonder that by 1883 only 10,000 animals remained, and that by 1889 this was reduced to 541. Concern over the fate of the buffalo was almost too late to save it from extinction. At the eleventh hour the few remaining animals were transferred to refuges and slowly but surely the herd was built up. Today in Canada alone there is an estimated 13,000, compared with only 1,200 in 1922. Thanks to the protection extended to the buffalo by the governments of the United States and Canada its survival now seems assured.

There are a number of photographs and three colored plates which add immeasurably to the appearance of the booklet.

As a concise account of the North American buffalo, the present booklet can be highly recommended. Teachers will find it especially useful as a reference for nature study and conservation education classes. — **AUSTIN W. CAMERON**

**A Pocket-Book of Lesser-Known British Birds.** By Wilfred Willett and Charles A. Hall. 1952. Adam and Charles Black, 4, 5, and 6 Soho Square, London, England. The MacMillan Co. of Canada, Toronto. 97 pp., 47 color plates, 1 diagram. Price, \$2.00.

This little volume, a companion to *A Pocket-Book of Common British Birds*, deals with 64 British birds that are uncommon, but not rare, in the British Isles. The British status, appearance, voice, nest and eggs, and food are given succinctly for each species. Forty-eight species are illustrated in 47 full-page plates in color and the topography of birds is clearly shown in a pen drawing. This compact, adequately illustrated, and inexpensive little book will be particularly useful to bird-minded travellers to the British Isles and to others who need a brief popular treatment of the species treated.—**W. EARL GODFREY**.





Godfrey, W E. 1952. "A Pocket-Book of Lesser-Known British Birds, by Wilfred Willett and Charles A. Hall [Review]." *The Canadian field-naturalist* 66(6), 176–176. <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.341466>.

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