

figures. The terms used in the text to denote size are useless because undefined. One solitary figure (7, Plate 1) has a scale; 1,301 figures leave the reader baffled regarding size. The figures of *Heterophyes heterophyes* and *Fasciolopsis buski* are about 55 mm. and 52 mm. long, respectively, whereas actual lengths may be 2 mm. and 75 mm. A reader having no foreknowledge of actual differences in size between trematodes may be greatly deceived by the figures, some of which are excellent but others are very poor and too small to be serviceable. He will also be disappointed in the general account of the digenetic trematodes, which barely covers one page and might have been amplified to an interesting and useful statement.

In spite of its shortcomings, the work will be much appreciated by all those who are concerned with trematodes, and its publication is at the same time a remarkable achievement and a notable event. The book summarizes most of the laborious and tedious systematic work which has been carried out, but it does indicate to the enlightened initiate how much research of a synthetic nature remains to be done.

BEN DAWES

HARMONIOUS HERPETOLOGY

A Field Guide to Reptiles and Amphibians of the United States and Canada East of the 100th Meridian

By Roger Conant. (The Peterson Field Guide Series.) Pp. xv+366+40 plates. (Boston, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1958.) 3.95 dollars.

DESPITE the number of books that already exist on North American herpetology, until now there has been no up-to-date survey and guide to the reptiles as well as the amphibians of that continent. For many years the little book of Schmidt and Davis provided an accurate guide to the snakes, but with the changes that have taken place in the nomenclature and taxonomy of American herpetology there became an urgent need to revise the "Field Book of Snakes" or replace it with another guide. In 1957, there appeared the "Handbook of Snakes" by Wright and Wright, but in two bulky volumes it could scarcely be considered a substitute for the earlier field guide. The book produced by Roger and Isabelle Conant is the answer to the urgent demand; it is remarkable in that it covers not only the snakes but also all the reptiles and amphibians that are known to occur in North America east of the 100th meridian and yet is of a handy pocket size and is reasonably priced.

The tradition of the Peterson Field Guide Series of combining scientific accuracy with readability has been maintained in this latest volume. In Britain many people are familiar with the "Field Guide to the Birds of Britain and Europe", by Peterson, Mountfort and Hollom, and some may be acquainted with the companion volumes on American birds; all praise the success and outstanding merit of these guides. The field guide to reptiles and amphibians of eastern North America, however, contains several special virtues. The inclusion of distribution maps in the guide to the British birds was at that time an unusual feature, but their value was at once acknowledged and the habit of including maps in check lists and field guides spread to other works. The Conants' book provides a series of well-executed maps which are confined to the end of the

book and on which are shown the range of each species and subspecies discussed in the text, so that a check list for any region, state or county can easily be compiled. The photographs are of a superb quality and Mrs. Conant is to be congratulated on the excellent results of her painstaking task of hand dyeing more than 400 of them. Many of the original illustrations were seen by the reviewer, when it was evident that Mrs. Conant had spared no effort in achieving accuracy in colour and detail. Only live animals were photographed. A little of the brilliance of a few of the original illustrations has been lost in reproduction yet no one can deny that for identification purposes the best photographs and colour plates of American reptiles and amphibians are to be found in this book.

The format is essentially the same as in the other guides in the series. Specimens can be identified from the illustrations, with the aid of the salient features of the species listed on the facing page, or from the text where under each species are guides to the identification with notes on voice (in the case of the frogs and toads), size, similarity with other species, and range. Habitat notes and information on habits and natural food are given where known.

The introduction, and the chapters on the techniques employed in collecting reptiles and amphibians, on transporting the specimens, on snake-bite and its treatment, and on the care of the animals in captivity are highly commendable. Although most people will agree on the clumsiness of the term "reptiles and amphibians" when it occurs several times on one page, some purists will be disturbed to find it abbreviated to "herptiles" in this book. Nevertheless, Roger Conant's style is refreshing in its simplicity, and the expressiveness of his descriptions of the mating calls of frogs is worthy of special praise. The voice of the western chorus frog, *Pseudacris t. triseriata*, is likened to the sound produced by "running a finger over approximately the last twenty of the small teeth of a good-quality pocket comb, rubbing the shortest teeth last". Other mnemonics for frog calls range from "loose banjo strings" to "high pitched riveting machines".

"A Field Guide to Reptiles and Amphibians of the United States and Canada East of the 100th Meridian" is an essential companion to the collector of American "herptiles", to those whose interests are in the realms of systematics and behaviour and who require a dependable guide to the identification of the American species and also to the beginner in herpetology.

Mr. Conant has achieved success with his field guide to the eastern species. It is hoped that he will be persuaded to tackle with the same courage and patience a field guide to the herpetofauna of western North America.

A. G. C. GRANDISON

THE ART OF GRAFTING

The Grafter's Handbook

By R. J. Garner. Revised edition. Pp. 260+32 plates. (London: Faber and Faber, Ltd., 1958.) 25s. net.

DURING the eleven years that have elapsed since the publication of the first edition of "The Grafter's Handbook" there has been ample proof of its value not only as a long-awaited text-book for the student, but also as a reference book for the practical horticulturist and nurseryman.