

departments. Lack of adequate funds in the past prevented the conducting of much-needed restoration work. Under the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act, funds are made available to the States for co-operative programmes to increase wildlife populations, to procure information through field studies for improving the management of this natural resource, and to provide an annual surplus of game birds and mammals to be collected by hunting and trapping. The Act provides that the United States may pay 75 per cent of the cost of work performed on approved projects. Projects are confined to the purchase and development of lands, the restoration of natural environment, the maintenance of completed projects and the management of wildlife areas and resources (United States Department of the Interior: Fish and Wildlife Service. Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife. Regulatory Announcement No. 64: *Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration*. Pp. 21. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1962. 15 cents) (see also p. 1134 of this issue of *Nature*).

#### Wildfowl Research and Conservation

THE typically attractive report of the Wildfowl Trust for 1960-61, by Hugh Boyd and Peter Scott, is important for a number of accounts designed to show what has been happening in various parts of Europe with regard to wildfowl research and conservation (Pp. 204 + 65 photographs. Slimbridge: The Wildfowl Trust, 1962. 17s. 6d. net). The general picture emerging is that, in the field of conservation, legislation restricting shooting and other forms of destruction is now fairly severe. Continued reduction of 'shooting pressure', where this may be found necessary, is likely to call for improvements in the enforcement of existing legislation and for self-education and restraint by wildfowlers, rather than for further extensive restrictions. The pressure on wildfowl exerted by the continued loss of wetlands, offset to some extent by the construction of new reservoirs, cannot be relieved in any simple way. It calls for constant vigilance, for the early detection of major threats, and for dogged but not unreasonable resistance to changes which are unnecessarily harmful. Though this is certainly an international problem, shortly to be discussed at a full-scale European conference, it is also one against which people whose concern is primarily local can protest more effectively. It is to be regretted that the international problem of oil pollution of navigable waters has not been solved. The Trust and related organizations have no shortage of important and fascinating problems for investigation, but there are few people to carry them out—there are fewer than forty biologists in the whole of Europe able to give a substantial part of their time to research on wildfowl. Yet, in relation to the work which has to be done, the need for more workers is even more important and urgent in the practical application of research, in education and the other tasks of conservation. It is gratifying to read of the increased number of visitors to the Trust's collections at Slimbridge and Peakirk.

#### The Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves

IN several ways 1961-62 was remarkable in the history of the Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves. Early in the year the Nature Conservancy was enabled, through a grant of £1,500 from the Society, supplemented by £500 from a generous donor, to acquire 123 acres of downland at Wye and Crundale in Kent as a National Nature Reserve.

The reserve lies on the southern escarpment of the North Downs and is an excellent example of the product of long-continued grazing by sheep. It is cut into deeply by the conspicuous Devil's Kneading Trough. Entomologically and botanically, the area is of considerable interest. The year saw a further impressive expansion of the County Naturalists' Trusts' movement. New Trusts were established in Gloucestershire, Northumberland and Co. Durham, the Lake District, Cornwall and Shropshire, and the process of formation was started in Wiltshire, Cheshire, Lancashire, Hertfordshire and Middlesex. In Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire, Herefordshire and Somerset, discussions about forming Trusts are going on, and within eighteen months almost every county in England, and possibly Wales, should be covered by a Trust. To the Society's co-ordinating and advisory functions has now been added the important responsibility of acting as a channel for the Trusts' applications for financial aid to the Society, the World Wildlife Fund and the Nature Conservancy. Full details of its activities are available in the forty-fifth annual report of the Society for the year ended March 31, 1962 (Pp. 64. London: The Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves, British Museum (Natural History), 1962. 10s.).

#### The Lake District

THE case for resisting encroachments on the amenities of the Lake District is eloquently pleaded in the July issue of the *Report and Newsletter* of the Friends of the Lake District (Pp. 21. Ulverston: Friends of the Lake District, 1962). Of recent attempts to remove more water from the Lakes, the society contends that no more water should be taken away until it has been established beyond all doubt that the consumers who need water cannot be supplied from sources outside the National Park. The society offers total and determined opposition to the damming of lakes and the flooding of valleys, and to the heightening of existing embankments on such lakes as Crummock Water or Ennerdale. If further water has to be taken from Lake District sources, then the method of intakes in the lower courses of rivers (that is, below the respective lakes), with or without pumping, is that least injurious, always providing that the interests of agriculture and of communities lying downstream are safeguarded by the reservation of adequate compensation water. That the Lake District sources could be developed more cheaply by more ruthless methods is not sufficient argument for their adoption. For cheapness must not be the chief criterion. The values that National Parks exist to serve must be given their full weight in the equation; neither considerations of mere convenience nor money values should be allowed to become the deciding factors. The *Report and Newsletter* also records the public-spiritedness of the North-Western Electricity Board which, despite approval from the Minister of Power, changed its policy with regard to a long stretch of overhead mains and decided, at its own expense, to put them underground.

#### Handa Island Nature Reserve

THE Royal Society for the Protection of Birds recently announced an important new reserve on the uninhabited island of Handa, off the west coast of Sutherland (*Council for Nature. Intelligence Unit*, 30, August 1962). The proprietors have made an agreement with the Society to manage this magnificent sea-bird colony as a nature reserve and bird