

## REVIEWS

*The birds around us. New Zealand birds, their habits and habitats* by Geoff Moon. William Heinemann (NZ) Ltd. pp. 1-206.

Those who bought this book at the Book of the Month price of \$15.95 are lucky. Even at the increased price since then, it will be money well spent.

The brief foreward is by the late Sir Robert Falla. There are 357 colour plates, illustrating 107 species of birds, arranged in the sequence of the *Annotated Checklist of the Birds of New Zealand*.

Geoff Moon, veterinarian turned bird photographer, a man of almost infinite patience when he wants to photograph a bird, is already renowned in New Zealand and overseas for his bird pictures. He has kept his text to a minimum, but it is adequate to explain his superb photographs. If he should not publish another book — and I hope there will be many more from his pen and camera — this volume, as well as those which preceded, will be monument to the patience, devotion and skill of one of the world's best photographers. The production is superb.

Buy it if you can. If you cannot (and as I write, three leading Christchurch booksellers are sold out), borrow it. Enjoy it, and count yourself lucky that we have a Geoff Moon to do for our delight what many of us cannot do for ourselves.

— RON SCARLETT

*Waterfowl: ducks, geese and swans of the world* by Frank S. Todd. Sea-World Press. Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, New York and London. \$US45.00.

The city of San Diego in southern California must surely be the most outstanding in the world for seeing animals in almost ideal conditions of captivity: there is its Zoo, its Wild Animal Park and its Sea World, each enlightened in concept, brilliant in design and enviable in its record of animal health and breeding success. And the range of species held by the three organisations as a whole is superlative: almost every family of vertebrate — terrestrial, freshwater, marine, polar, temperate, tropical; most things from whales to humming-birds, and even some invertebrates as well.

By no means least among the collections is that of waterfowl at Sea World. Only the Wildfowl Trust at Slimbridge rivals it in comprehensiveness and setting; in fact, those responsible for its research and management programmes call the Sea World collection "Slimbridge West" — a humorously affectionate unofficial title that not only pays tribute to the Trust but pretty accurately reflects the scope, quality and philosophy of Sea World's achievements.

The creator and curator of all this (as the dust jacket neatly puts it) is the author of this book; and Frank S. Todd has done an excellent job. *Waterfowl* is large and lavishly illustrated and cannot help but remind you of Forshaw's *Parrots of Australia* in that it, too,