

cellent means of getting acquainted with the local flora and fauna. For the serious student of systematic biology, these books include very good references to the more technical studies. The books will perhaps find their best use as field guides for students who wish to extend their classroom experiences in the biological sciences.

This reviewer has found all 25 guides in the series helpful and enjoyable.

Betty Wislinsky
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UNDERSTANDING ECOLOGY, Elizabeth T. Billington, 87 pp., \$3.95, Frederick Warne and Co., New York, 1968.

This volume, a useful supplement to a junior or senior high school biology course, considers ecosystems, balance of nature, biosphere, the biomes of the world, communities, habitat and niche, energy, and food cycles, and biogeochemical cycles. Suggestions for a few observation activities are included, along with instructions for record keeping of observations. Rather than a glossary, the index refers readers back to the text page where the term is defined in context, certainly a sounder educational method than the usual separate glossary. Diagrams are clear, and the photographs—many of them from the American Museum of Natural History—are of good quality.

H. G.

AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL, Gary McFarland, (Recording), \$4.95, Skye Recording Co., Ltd., 40 W. 55th St., New York 10019, 1969.

A recording of a symphonic piece composed by McFarland in the jazz idiom. The composer has taken the theme of man's destruction of his environment and composed 6 sections of music. The music is listenable, and would be interesting without a program. There are occasional hints of theme-music connections, however. An interesting aspect of teaching conservation and available at a reduced rate (above) to members of NABT.

FROM SEA TO SHINING SEA. The President's Council on Recreation and Natural Beauty, 304 pp. \$2.50. The Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1968.

An abundance of well-selected black-and-white photographs makes this book a better mirror of the present face of America than one can obtain elsewhere at several times the price. Further, if one can tolerate an aseptic official prose style, the letterpress provides much information concerning still small—but rather numerous—efforts to cope with the impact on the American landscape of a large mass of perhaps natively untidy primates furnished with impressive energy resources.

What has something created by a "Council on Recreation and Natural Beauty" to do with biology? Very little—at least directly—with most of the biology now being taught in classrooms. There are no crayfish exopodites, though the litter of exurbanites receives attention; there is no DNA, though the TVA is present; there are no mitochondria, though perhaps some occasion for hypochondria. Even the teacher with a "whole organism" background may at first be puzzled. Nevertheless, the book is essentially an essay in ecology. Twelve different variants of that term occur in the index, together with thirteen forms of the term "environment." For the report of the Council is really not concerned directly with recreation and beauty. Rather it is concerned with the conditions in which a true recreation of human beings can occur and from which beauty can develop. One of the numerous quotations (this one from R. F. Dasmann) makes the point: "Beauty is order, it is health, it is diversity, it is function. The opposite of beauty is disorder, disease, monotony and malfunction."

Yes, this is a biology book. If it seems a link with your social studies department, so much the better for both of you.

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