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became ecologic mistakes. Man moves the animals about: "That's the way it often is with people; instead of looking to the creatures with which nature surrounded them, they redesign the world according to their own ideas," Laycock says, in this delightfully written account of the disastrous effects of animal importation. Chain reactions are set in motion, upsetting nature's delicate balance; the errors of man's deeds emerge throughout the text. Numerous photographs illustrate examples of misplaced animals. Thoughtful young readers will find interesting, informative, and challenging reading here.

Elizabeth J. Davison
Swarthmore (Pa.) High School

MYSTERIES FROM THE PAST, ed. by Thomas G. Aylesworth. 1971. Natural History Press, Garden City, N. Y. 112 p. \$3.95.

This slim anthology is an enchanting encounter with anthropology and the scientific enterprise as a whole. The nine articles, by six authors, all appeared in *Nature and Science* magazine. Aylesworth introduces each mystery with a short summary paragraph.

Such familiar historical puzzles as Stonehenge, Easter Island, and Atlantis are traced with the freshness of tomorrow's news. Oh, that the history books of my junior-high days had told about the Mayan Indians and the Norse explorers with such "whodunit" excitement! The authors make guesses about the gigantic stone spheres found in the jungles of Costa Rica and about the incredible accuracy of a map, depicting part of Antarctica's coastline, that was drawn by the Turkish admiral Piri Re'is centuries before scientists explored the region. The life of the earliest Indians of our own Pacific Northwest coast is a mystery described in another article, which depicts teams

of specialists and students as they systematically search for more pieces of the puzzle of a culture that may be 6,000 years old. The final story tells of a "village upon a village" discovery at Jarmo, in northern Iraq; with this stratified evidence, the author traces the development of man from hunter to farmer to village specialist who used metals and built temples.

Each article illuminates the scientific enterprise: its piecemeal presentation of data, its tentative hypotheses, its admission of limitations in methods and tools of discovery, and its description of a slow progress built through the efforts of many inquirers. Illustrations are plentiful, and many special terms are defined. The articles seem navigable for the sixth-grade adventurer and entertaining for all ages beyond. Only the last article smacks of "talking down" to youngsters and of being illustrated for a traditional elementary textbook.

Surely all teachers who care about kids' enjoying books in general, and science in particular, will welcome such helps as *Mysteries from the Past*. It is a message in "undogma" for those who want to know science as a way of life.

Helen H. James
Southern Illinois University
Carbondale

BACKYARD SAFARI, by John and Cathleen Polgreen. 1971. Doubleday & Co., New York. Unpagged. \$4.50.

This attractive book is designed to encourage expeditions to the "nearby"—a backyard, a park, a vacant lot. Many of the black-and-white photographs have an artistic rather than a realistic quality, and here is the drawback: those with a black background will not be of much help to children in recog-

nizing some of the living things. Without familiar objects for comparison, it is difficult to tell exact sizes and shapes; this is the case, for example, in the pictures of the hollyhock, the Japanese beetle and the wood sorrel. Some children will want names for those that are without them, such as "the 'useless' weed" (dock), "the big noisy colorful bird" (blue jay), and the "little quiet gray birds" (?). These omissions are strange, since names—even "samaras" (key fruits)—are generally included. However, the book is informative and should arouse interest in one's immediate surroundings.

Frances L. Behnke
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ANIMALS NOBODY LOVES, by Ronald Rood. 1971. Stephen Green Press, Brattleboro, Vt. 215 p. \$6.95.

This is a delightful book in defense of "critters." It will appeal to readers of all ages. What do you know about the gallantry of the wolf, the intelligence of the octopus, the fastidiousness of the pig, the radar of the bat? Or did you know that there are really no "sand fleas," that the eel is really a fish, that coyotes cunningly hunt in pairs, that there are differences in snake eyes? These and many other interesting facts are found in this book. Other hated and harried animals discussed are the rat, mosquito, and spider.

Most biology teachers have found themselves in the position of defending these unloved animals to their students. Rood does this so well—and all in one volume—that a teacher will be glad to own his book.

Martha G. Taylor
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