

general, the information is presented clearly but with a tendency to oversimplify or inadequately explain complex biological phenomena. This is particularly true of speciation and the geographical variation in seals; she is apparently surprised that, although there is mixing in the populations of the Pribilof fur seal, there are no specific or subsequent differences between them; surely it would be surprising to find such differences in this situation. Again the differences in the time of breeding of the California sea lion on the Galapagos Islands and in California is dismissed as being due to the fact that these areas are in different hemispheres; in fact the Galapagos are on the equator and there is clearly some other factor responsible for the difference of six months in the breeding season of these two groups. Among grey seals it is not true that the bulls take up the inland breeding territories first and that these offer the best sites. In fact the shore is occupied first and offers the best site for mating.

But most of these criticisms are minor and I recommend the book, which is extremely cheap for the amount of information it contains, as a "best buy".

J. C. COULSON

The Seal Summer, by Nina Warner Hooke. Barker, 21s.

The relentless mass slaughter of seals by man has gone on for generations, and we have no reason to expect a seal to show anything but antipathy towards human beings. Today most seals show a preference for wild, remote and isolated places. It is therefore remarkable in the extreme that during the summer of 1961 a wild grey seal should have frequented a Dorset beach and deliberately cultivated the company of holiday makers.

Nina Warner Hooke who lives near the beach in question, has collected as much information as possible about this extraordinary seal and presented it in a very readable form. She vividly and entertainingly describes its forthcoming behaviour in swimming with bathers, wrapping its flippers round their limbs and even trying to tug off their swimming suits! On the beach it associated itself with picnic parties and allowed itself to be fondled and caressed by people of all ages. Indeed, it was so like a confiding domestic pet that it has clearly been difficult, on occasion, to resist a subjective interpretation of its behaviour. The contrast between this almost embarrassingly friendly wild seal and my now cool, word-responsive tame seal Atlanta is strikingly presented. Photographs which show the seal intimately associating with its human companions convincingly support and confirm the record in the text. Attention is focused upon an individual animal in a way which will arouse the wide public interest which is an important factor in seal conservation.

H. G. HURRELL

Shadows in the Sea, by Harold W. McCormick, Tom Allen and Captain William Young. Sidgwick & Jackson, 35s.

The authors of this interesting book have collected an enormous amount of information, much of it new, which is refreshing because a great deal of nonsense has been written about sharks in the past. It is evidently based on the immense knowledge of the late Captain Young, a shark-hunter for over sixty years, and a man of immense experience in this field; Chapter 3 gives an account of his life.

The first part deals with well authenticated accounts of shark attacks in many parts of the world, and then proceeds to the means of combating sharks—a manual of anti-shark warfare—and to methods of shark fishing.