

## REVIEWS

### THE INTERNATIONAL GEOPHYSICAL YEAR.

By WALTER SULLIVAN. *Published in: International Conciliation No. 521, January 1959, pp. 259-336. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. 7¾ x 5½ inches. New York: Columbia University Press. 25¢.*

The purpose of *International Conciliation* is to present to its readers factual statements and analyses of problems in the field of international organization. Each issue is devoted to a single topic, and is written by a specialist in that field. It is published five times a year by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. The January (1959) issue is devoted, not to the scientific accomplishments of the IGY, but rather to the story of the IGY from the point of view of the historian.

The author, Walter Sullivan, was IGY reporter for *The New York Times*, which assigned him as a full-time reporter to the year. Mr. Sullivan visited many of the IGY Stations, among them the McCall Glacier Station in Alaska, run for the U.S. Program by the Arctic Institute. He knows the subject from the earliest inception, and has presented an account of the IGY from the forerunners of the year in the nineteenth century, through the Polar Years up to the preparation of the IGY. He explains the administration of the IGY, the basic policies, and the case of Chinese participation — the only exception to the general "triumph of science over politics". The publication ends with a chapter on "legacy of the IGY", where the author discusses some of the difficulties experienced in a meeting on common ground of so many countries. In spite of these difficulties, as an experiment in scientific co-operation across all political boundaries, the IGY was highly successful.

This publication will be most illuminating for the scientist who may only

vaguely know the background of the IGY, and for those who realize that a knowledge of international relations is vital for their work.

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### SEALS, SEA LIONS, AND WALRUSES. A REVIEW OF THE PINNIPEDIA.

By VICTOR B. SCHEFFER. *Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1958. London: Oxford University Press. 9¼ x 6¼ inches, x + 179 pages, 32 plates, 15 text figures, 3 tables. \$5.00.*

The last comprehensive review of the Pinnipedia appeared in 1880. The present work, by one of the world's foremost authorities on marine mammals, will doubtless be warmly welcomed by mamalogists everywhere. International interest in pinnipeds and their conservation has increased greatly in recent years, and there is a need, as pointed out by the author, for international agreement on names of the various groups and degrees of isolation of populations.

The book is compact, and although the binding could have been stronger, the publishers are to be congratulated on producing a work of this scope at a price that puts it well within reach of students and other interested persons.

The introduction is largely a tabulated summary of the numerical status of 55 known populations of pinnipeds in the world. The first five chapters of the book summarize up-to-date knowledge of the characteristics of pinnipeds (including reproduction, growth, and mortality), the evolution of the order and its families, the evolution of the genera, species, and subspecies, a description of the taxonomic procedure used by the author, and a systematic account by species and subspecies. The final chapter consists of a synoptic key to the genera. There is a

comprehensive list of world literature and a section of very good photographs of representative specimens of the various groups.

The work is authoritative and accurate, and contains material and references as recent as 1958. There is much controversy over some aspects of pinniped taxonomy. Many subspecies have been described on the basis of very scant material. Being a "lumper" like most non-taxonomists, I was glad to note a conservative approach to the problem by the author, who stresses the need for this, a uniform scale of values, and world-wide consistency.

Of interest to those concerned with the Arctic is the author's change of the genus name *Phoca* for three of the northern phocids to which it generally has been applied. The ringed seal becomes *Pusa hispida*, the harp seal becomes *Pagophilus groenlandica*, and the ribbon seal becomes *Histiophoca fasciata*. *Phoca* is retained only for the har-

bour seal (*P. vitulina*). Some scientists may not agree with the allocation of different generic rank to these four groups. However, there is at least partial support for this action from other workers, including those in the U.S.S.R.

Much new and intensive work is under way on the Pinnipedia, the results of which will quickly make some parts of this book obsolete. The author, by frequent use of question marks, has obviously attempted to stimulate further research, and it can be argued that now is the right time to do this when interest is at a peak, rather than to delay publication and wait for the results of recent and current work.

The work is not a hurried one. Dr. Scheffer has treated his subject with much common sense, and has done a great deal to place the controversial problems of pinniped taxonomy on a sound basis on which can be built better universal agreement.

H. D. FISHER

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### Technical Papers of the Arctic Institute

No. 2 of this series, *THE MAMMALS OF BANKS ISLAND*. By T. H. Manning and A. H. Macpherson, 75 pages, maps, diagrams, tables, has appeared. Copies can be obtained from the Montreal Office at the price of \$1.00 to members, \$2.00 to non-members.