

BOOK RECEIVED

A. P. Gray: Mammalian Hybrids. A Check-List with Bibliography. Commonwealth Agricultural Bureaux. Edinburgh 1971. Second Edition. X+262 pp.

The second edition, revised and emended, of the well-known bibliography on mammalian hybrids, has been published 17 years after the appearance of the first edition. The same design and arrangement of material has, however, been retained. A list is given of crossbred species arranged in systematic order both in cases in which it proved possible to obtain an authentic hybrid and also in cases when the experiment proved unsuccessful. The new edition of this bibliography is for more exhaustive than the first, due not only to taking into consideration literature published during the last 17 years but also to the addition in some cases of earlier studies to supplement the information given.

It is a source of satisfaction to find that publications by Polish researchers who have studied interspecies hybrids in mammals, have also been included in the bibliography.

It might appear that A. P. Gray's bibliography is very accurate and complete, since it even contains articles from popular periodicals (e.g. from »Wszecławiat«, The Universe) but in respect of the field of which I have slightly more detailed knowledge, i.e. interspecific hybrids of animals belonging to the genera *Bos* and *Bison* I find that quite a large number of interesting papers have been omitted. For instance, among the material omitted are the experiments made by L. Walicki and described in detail by G. Karcov, (Beloveżskaja Pušča, St. Petersburg 1903) and by M. A. Zablocki, 1956 (Gosudarstvennaja Plemen-naja Kniga Zubrov i Bizonov, čistokrovnyh, i čistoporodnyh i gibridnyh. Moskva 1, 117 pp), and relating to the first experimental cross-breeding of European bison with domestic cattle. Interesting information on spontaneous occurrence of hybrids of European bison and domestic cattle is also given in the important article by H. Sienkiewicz (1882) on the Białowieża Primeval Forest (»Słowo«, Warszawa, No 242. p. 1). Data on hybrids of domestic cattle and American bison contained in the study by J. A. Allen, 1876, (Mem. Mus. Comp. Zool. Harv. Coll., Cambridge 4, 10: IX + 246 pp.) have also been omitted. In addition to these earlier studies a number of later studies and useful articles containing valuable data on hybrids within the genera *Bos* and *Bison* have been omitted (e.g.: Baskirov I., 1939: Pervyj god raboty po vosstanovlenju zubra i jego akklimatizacji v Krymskom gosudarstven-nom zapovednike. Glavnoje Upravlenie po zapovednikam, zooparkam i zoosadam. pp. 138—144 Moskva; Groeben G., 1929: Ber. Inter. Gesell. Erhalt. Wisents. Berlin 3, 2: 78—86; Groeben G., 1932: *ibid.* 5, 1, 33—40; Ivanov M. F., 1950: Izbr. Soc. Moskva, 3: 135—156, 423—432; Kalugin S. G., 1968: Vosstanovlenie zubra na severo-zapadnom Kavkaze. Trudy Kavkazskogo Gosud. Zapoved. 10: 3—94 Moskva; Mohr E., 1933: Ber. Inter. Gesell. Erhalt. Wisents. Berlin 5, 2: 56—57, 59—60, and others).

It is, however, well known that it is practically impossible, for a variety of reasons, to compile any complete bibliography, and therefore the examples of gaps which I have given in no way detract from the value of this publication, especially as it covers a very wide range, taking into consideration all interspecific hybrids in mammals. A. P. Gray's book will most certainly facilitate searches for bibliographic sources to anyone interested in such hybrids, and in addition be of great assistance to those interested in various general questions such as heterosis, the systematic relationship of species etc. This publication will undoubtedly prove of great service to those working in the fields of genetics, zoology, animal husbandry — in a word, to all those interested in mammals and their breeding.

Z. Janczewski