

## BOOK RECEIVED

**G. Markov, »Bozajnici«, Nauka i Izkustvo, Sofia 1972, 417 pp, ill.**

The book »Bozajnici« by Professor G. N. Markov is a consecutive publication from the series of monographs on mammals, which fills a gap in the Bulgarian theriological literature. The text is preceded by exhaustive introductory remarks by Professor A. I. Hadziolov. This introduction defines the position of the book in Bulgarian theriological literature, gives its characteristics and positive opinion.

The book is addressed to a broad circle of readers. It can be used by scientists, but mainly by students and naturalists, as well as by other people interested in mammals (edition of 3083 copies). This fact necessarily implies a popular character of the book.

The book is written intelligibly and rather comprehensively as for such condensed work. The text is arranged in the following manner: Introduction (2 pp); Part I — General (66 pp); Part II — Systematic (259 pp); Part III — Distribution and ecology of mammals (44 pp); Part IV — Origin and evolution of mammals (9 pp); Part V — Origin of domesticated mammals (5 pp); Part VI — Economical importance of mammals (4 pp); References (3 pp), and Indexes.

Information concerning some selected species is preceded by concise characteristic of particular classes, orders and families. More attention is being paid to mammals occurring on the territory of Bulgaria; in case of more numerous families also some exotic species are mentioned. The body structure and way of life of individual species are briefly described. The main scheme of description is the following: names (Bulgarian and Latin), geographical range, dimensions and body structure, coat colour, environment, food, reproduction, length of life, economical importance, eventual data on species protection.

Necessary conciseness of descriptions is not always advantageous since some essential data from newer theriological literature are lacking, e.g. phenomena of seasonal changes in shrews. Moreover, the periods of their sexual maturation and reproduction are given incorrectly, similarly as the period of sexual maturity in *Neomys fodiens*. The life span of the European bison is overestimated by 15 years in comparison with the data obtained during rearing of this animal, although a special publication on this subject is lacking. Such shortcomings should be eliminated in a next edition.

The graphical side of the book is rich although not always correctly selected. Photographic reproductions are rather poor in comparison with drawings borrowed from the literature. The schematic »maps« of distribution of principal representatives of mammals given in chapter III are good instructive illustrations. Also a successful graphical project of end papers by Z. Taseva should be emphasized.

This popular monograph of mammals elaborated by Professor G. Markov is — despite some shortcomings — a useful position in Bulgarian theriological literature since it renders available to all interested readers comprehensive and most important information on this group of animals.

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