

BOOK REVIEWS

AUSTRALIAN PARROTS IN COLOUR,
by Len Robinson, published by Rigby,
Adelaide, 1970; 31 pp. Price \$2.25.

This handsome production has been planned not primarily for ornithologists expecting a comprehensive treatment of the Australian psittacines, but rather as a pleasing visual experience for everyman willing to appreciate what Mr. Robinson aptly calls "the gems of the Australian bush." It is a book 7½"x10", comprising sixty colour photographs of exceptional quality: the gloss and detail of every feather do ample justice to the acknowledged splendour of so many members of the parrot family.

Forty-eight of our sixty-odd parrot species are portrayed, together with accurate captions on their distribution and habitat. The fact that about a quarter of the birds depicted are captive specimens is somewhat regrettable; the plumage of parrots in captivity is seldom as immaculate as that of wild specimens, and here, in several cases, the pose is a frightened, unnatural one. However, this objection is more than offset by some outstanding shots taken in the wild; special mention must be made of a male and female Marshall's Fig Parrot feeding on *Ficus* fruits; a young Major Mitchell Cockatoo in alarm display; and several delightful studies of *Neophemas* feeding nestlings.

Mr. Robinson introduces his photographs with a double-page commentary on some aspects of the natural history and characteristics of the different groups of Australian parrots. Aiming at a wide readership, he includes some timely and practical suggestions for the conservation of this most popular group of Australian birds.

COLIN LONDON.