

REVIEW

James Fisher. Bird Recognition. Vol I. Sea-birds and Waders. 119 Pp.; illustr. (Pelican Books.) Penguin Books. 1947.

Although we have not yet seen any reviews of this excellent "pocket book," there is little doubt that it will be enthusiastically received not only by the layman and bird-watcher for whom it is intended, but also by all those interested in birds the world over. Nothing quite like it has ever appeared before; the illustrations are not only decorative but practical, and an immense amount of information has been compressed into a comparatively small space.

This is the first of a series of three "hand-books" devoted to British birds, and should appeal to Australian ornithologists because it includes a number of species which occur here: Black Cormorant, Sooty Shearwater, Bar- and Black-tailed Godwits, Whimbrel, Turnstone, Knot, Curlew Sandpiper, Sanderling, Common Sandpiper, Wood-Sandpiper, Greenshank and Grey Plover, Pied Oystercatcher, Roseate Tern, Arctic Skua. Each species is figured in characteristic pose, and there are additional drawings of a number in flight showing wing-patterns and other markings.

Year-cycle charts are a useful introduction, and tell at a glance the yearly life in Britain of each species, with exact dates of breeding, appearance of young, times of migration, etc.

Except for the notes on breeding habits, Australians should find the notes on field characters, calls and habits generally applicable to birds seen here and a valuable aid to identification.

Many, no doubt, will object to the flimsy binding (similar to that of other titles in the Pelican series), but apart from this the publishers are to be commended on the production of this refreshing little volume at a price within reach of everybody.

H.T.C.