OCEAN WANDERERS. R. M. Lockley. Wren Publishing Pty., Ltd., Melbourne. 168 pp, 9 colour plates, 39 black and white, 23 figures, line drawings by Robert Gillmor. Price $12.50.

A book with a very apt title; it describes those animated flying machines — seabirds. Lockley's ocean wanderers are birds which wander restlessly yet with purpose over the oceans of the world, avoiding land as much as possible. Penguins (they fly underwater), albatrosses, petrels, tropic-birds, frigate-birds, gannets, skuas, gulls, terns, auks and phalaropes all qualify for inclusion, while those waders which violate the ocean sanctum on their migration are briefly mentioned in the last pages.

The first six chapters detail evolution, adaptation, behaviour, feeding grounds and man's influence upon seabirds. Seven further chapters discuss seabirds as groups and their taxonomy, distribution, physiology, behaviour and ecology. Understandably the work leans heavily on the author's extensive knowledge of more northerly birds. Consequently small or monotypic genera often receive prolonged treatment while large genera, like *Pterodroma*, are dismissed with a few lines.

Because the birds are treated biologically many taxonomists who find it necessary to fit forms in convenient artificial slots might be irked at the treatment of species.

While I can sympathise with Lockley's view that the two allopatric *Phoebetria* are merely dark and light morphs, his division of *Diomedea cauta* and *D. salvini* is inconsistent with his general policy of species definition. What could be especially tiring to workers who have recently described additional differences between *Macronectes giganteus* and *M. halli* is lack of recognition that *giganteus* has ever been split! However, a refreshing essay about prions expresses a message which thorough readers should comprehend — that more data are needed before many forms can be classified correctly.

The distribution maps of species or species-groups are very helpful, and also indicate relationships of many forms which are often divided specifically by others on mainly morphological and geographical grounds.

Photographs were collected from many sources and maintain a fine quality. Robert Gillmor's line drawings display an ability to create almost living birds from a series of ink-lines and dots; and all illustrations are typical of the high standard of the book. A few faults could have been avoided, mainly printing errors. The phalaropes pictured opposite p. 105 are captioned wrongly; fig. 10 has been printed as a mirror image; the subspecies of *Puffinus carneipes* are misplaced in fig. 11.

This book is particularly recommended to persons who require knowledge of the real birds, and why they tick; to those needing more than just a book on birds with the usual monotonous list of species' characters. Taxonomists and beginners will also find this work useful; the former cannot hope for correct classification without an idea of seabird biology. Lockley has almost lived with some species and now he enhances our knowledge by writing about seabirds found throughout the world. He shows the dynamic state of their evolution and reminds many that seabirds are seldom static in any direction — an impression given by so many writers, which makes it easy to be lulled into accepting a situation of false stability.

Confirmed seabirders and the uninitiated will be impressed by this presentation of these birds as living beings adapted into ultimate streamlined forms for their ariel and marine environment. — J. B. COX.