

## Book reviews

*Scottish Climbs*, vols 1 and 2. HAMISH MACINNES. Constable, 1971. £1.75 each.

The subtitle of these volumes, 'A Mountaineer's Guide to Climbing in Scotland' is an excellent description of their purpose. They contain a representative selection of climbs on all the major crags in Scotland including two sea stacks, the Old Man of Stoer and the Old Man of Hoy. The photographs are excellent, not only illustrating the topography of the rock faces, but also showing climbers in action on rock and snow. The text and photographs together give an exciting and informative survey of the wealth and variety of climbing available in Scotland.

The books are not meant to supplement the traditional guides published by the Scottish Mountaineering Club, the author emphasising this himself in the introduction, but they must inevitably invite comparison. The obvious difference, of course, is in the smaller number of climbs described. For example, only about a third of the routes on Lochnagar featured in the SMC guide appear in MacInnes. The descriptions of the individual climbs are shorter, but, without actually trying them out on the rock, appear to be adequate. However, an important and welcome feature of these volumes is the emphasis given in both the illustrations and the text to the crags under winter conditions. Indeed, some routes, for example, Polyphemus and Raeburn's gullies on Lochnagar, are described only as winter routes although they are also rock climbs.

Anyone climbing regularly in a particular area will need the appropriate SMC guide, but for occasional visits to less familiar districts, 'Scottish Climbs' will be good books to have.

A. J. K. M.

*The Scottish Lochs*, vols 1 and 2. TOM WEIR. Constable, 1970. £1.75 and £2.

It is not often that books are published which can fit easily into a rucksack pocket, but that surely is where Tom Weir's *Scottish Lochs* books belong. So much information on many different subjects is packed into these narrow volumes, they demand to be used when out and about, and not left on the book shelf at home. Have you forgotten how the parallel roads of Glen Roy were formed? Do you want to fish in Loch Watten? What kind of alpine are you likely to find in Trotternish? Has anyone ever heard of the song made up by the poacher who liked to live near Lochan Uaine near Derry Cairngorm? And exactly when did the ospreys come back to Speyside? Apart from the most interesting text, there are many photographs of the high standard we have come to expect of the author. These are the kind of books which, bought for someone's birthday, somehow end up rather battered but well used in one's own collection.

J. C. A.