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Henderson, David A. MEN AND WHALES AT SCAMMON'S LAGOON. Dawson's Book Shop, Los Angeles, 313 pp., 1972. Price \$24.00.

Henderson's book is a historical account of the discovery, exploration, and exploitation of Scammon's Lagoon, from the earliest Spanish exploration to the present time. As implied in the title, the focus of the book is on whaling in Scammon's Lagoon, although whaling for gray whales in all parts of the Pacific is considered, as are nonwhaling endeavors in the lagoon.

The information presented in the book is derived from what appears to have been an exhaustive search of both published and unpublished records. This is reflected in the detailed annotation and references to log-books, port records, etc., found in the text, and in an extensive bibliography.

This book is important not only as a thorough historical treatment of exploitation of both an area and a species, but also as a compilation of data necessary for an estimation of the original population size of the California gray whale stock. Henderson points out that Scammon's estimate of 30 to 40,000 is too high, and suggests that the original population was closer to 15 to 20,000. His documentation of catch and effort data for gray whaling in all areas should be sufficient to allow someone more versed in population dynamics to make a closer estimate. This is particularly important to considerations of the present status of this species.

The illustrations are few, but sufficient for this work. The tables in appendix are particularly useful, and the text in general might have been improved had more material been tabularized. Fortunately there is a good index allowing one to locate material scattered through the text.

The principal defect of the book lies not in its content, but in the organization of the text. There is a bewildering abundance of data within the text, tending to obscure some of the generalities presented and to generally confuse the reader. In several places it appears to have confused the author as well and he repeats material presented earlier. All things considered, however, the book is extremely valuable, both from a historic and a scientific standpoint.—JAMES MEAD, *Division of Mammals, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. 20560.*