

during the 1950s, the ills it was supposed to cure (urban congestion, economic inequality, and even war) persisted. But if aviation is no longer the popular hope of the future, echoes of the gospel reverberate in the recent enthusiasm for "ultralights"—lightweight aircraft that fly over 100 miles for every gallon of fuel—and in the visionaries' dream of colonies in outer space.

FIELD DAYS:
Journal of an
Itinerant Biologist
by Roger B. Swain
Scribner's, 1983
217 pp. \$12.95

Swain's approach in these 23 essays is to light upon a commonplace item—avocados, flypaper, hamburgers—and then to trace its connections with the larger biological world. Throughout, Swain tempers his affection for nature with an unsentimental regard for facts. Acknowledging the allure of evergreens in wintry landscapes, he proceeds to explain that their slow rate of photosynthesis means longevity (but not immortality) for pine needles and other hibernating hangers-on. Swain, science editor of *Horticulture* magazine, can be amusing, pointing out, for instance, how easy it is to lure farm guests to work *if* the work involves heavy machinery such as tractors or chain saws. He demonstrates how felling large trees for firewood rather than lumber results in net energy and income losses for many communities. Swain writes shrewdly about fickle human nature and the ways in which it sometimes threatens a fragile ecosystem.

FRAMES OF MIND:
The Theory of
Multiple Intelligences
by Howard Gardner
Basic, 1983
412 pp. \$23.50

Psychologists have sought for decades to dispel the idea that intelligence is a single, measurable trait, like height or eye color. Gardner, a Harvard psychologist, attempts to finish the job, carefully documenting his theory that the human mind accommodates at least six different "intelligences." These distinct endowments—linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, and personal—are most obvious in geniuses or *idiots savants*. All types of intelligence are