
BOOK REVIEW

The Venomous Reptiles of Latin America by Campbell, J.A. & W.W. Lamar, 1989.
Cornell

University Press; 425 pp., 34 tables, 109 maps, 6 topographic and vegetation maps, 568 figures (504 being colour pictures).
Cloth, US \$ 59.50.

The book is divided into three parts:

- 1: Three short chapters by contributing authors on snakebite treatment and first aid, an annotated bibliography and a list of antivenom producers.
- 2: Geographical resume of each country in turn, with a key to the venomous reptiles of each individual country. A table of distribution by either vegetation type or physiographic region is also presented for each country.
- 3: Species accounts. All the species of Latin America of the families *Helodermatidae*, *Elapidae*, *Hydrophiidae* and *Viperidae* are then presented with the information under the headings: scientific name, local names, english name, distribution, habitat, description, similar species, remarks (which includes any subspecies recognised) and references.

The species account is completed with a section on mimics, which includes a key to the mimics (and venomous snakes) to genus level. The text is completed with a thorough Glossary and References.

As a footnote for those readers of this review that like to keep on top of changes in taxonomic names this book has boldly used the division of *Bothrops* as basically suggested by Hoge. Further the rattle-

snake species *unicolor* and *vegrandis* are treated as subspecies of *durissus*.

That is the book, its text. The book itself has been a pleasure to review as it, without exaggeration, is the best available to herpetologists today and for some years to come. This statement is not given lightly but the book is essential for all students of Latin American herpetology, and also for those involved in any way with snake bite sufferers in the region, as effective treatment can only be successful after correct identification.

For the casual herpetologist the book is a delight to browse through. The large number of colour pictures illustrating many species rarely seen in collections around the world. To the publisher I extend my thanks for producing such a quality book, of such size at what must be seen as a reasonable cost.

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