

narrow possibilities in a particular area” and link sea mammals with “habitat” are not really helpful since many whales migrate across habitats anyway and since the regular observer has no real way to tell “temperate” habitats apart from “cool temperate” ones. The meaning of the orange W habitat class presented for the False Killer Whale will likely remain a mystery to the reader because its meaning is nowhere explained in the guide. For pinnipeds, their “calls” and the mentioning of rookeries could have been helpful.

Reptiles and Amphibians of Canada

By Chris Fisher, Amanda Joynt, and Ronald J. Brooks. 2007. Lone Pine Publishing, 206, 10426 – 81 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta T6E 1X5. 208 pages. 18.50 CAD.

It has been 24 years since the first comprehensive one-volume guide to all Canadian amphibians and reptiles known at the time appeared (Cook 1984) and that is now badly out-of-date and, fortunately, out-of-print. There have been new guides to several provinces since and a highly popularized superficial attempt for the entire country by Bumstead (2003).

For this new effort, only the third author, the legendary Ron Brooks of the University of Guelph will be very familiar to most Canadian herpetologists. Brooks has long been a CITES committee member and crusader and has made an extensive ecological contribution with a legion of graduate students conducting studies at Algonquin Park and selected central and southern Ontario sites. These have produced new insights into the lives of turtles and aquatic frogs in eastern Canada and one especially endangered snake (the Blue Racer). The other two authors have BScs from the University of Alberta. Chris Fisher is a writer of wildlife articles and field guides and lecturer on wildlife. Amanda Joynt, an ecologist from the Okanagan Valley, was a technician with Parks Canada and Canadian Wildlife Service, followed by writing full time for Lone Pine publishing, ecological surveys including rare plants in South Dakota, and direction (2004-2006) of Children in Wilderness Malawi, southern Africa. She now is a biologist for Fisheries and Oceans Canada in Inuvik, Northwest Territories.

The book is traditionally organized and opens with the mandatory acknowledgements, including one to Ron Brooks, odd in that he is also a coauthor. There is a very useful “Species at a glance” which gives a miniature reproduction of the text illustration, species by species, together with size, and account page number. The 12-page Introduction briefly highlights the antiquity of the groups and their characteristics. A map plots the location of selected national and provincial parks in Canada. This is followed by a summation of major habitats from the temperate west coast to the Maritimes, a discussion titled “the good, the bad and the misconceptions”, and another on the general harmlessness of most species as well as the negative aspects of keeping native species (not the least of which is that

Overall, it appears that this “guide” is an excerpt of a better and larger guide book from the same author. It is useable in the field, but does not replace the real and classical guide books.

FALK HUETTMANN

Centre for Wildlife Ecology, Biology Department, Simon Fraser University, 8888 University Drive, Burnaby, British Columbia V5A 1S6 Canada

in most provinces, is illegal to keep many species except under permit from resource departments). A few words on conservation are followed by the headings used in the species accounts. The latter are the bulk of the book (150 pages) and cover both native and introduced species: 11 freshwater or terrestrial turtles and 4 marine ones, 7 lizards, 26 snakes, 21 salamanders, and 25 frogs (including toads and treefrogs, etc.). Three of the turtles and are introduced or likely so, and two of these probably no longer occur, one lizard is introduced and one apparently extirpated, and one snake (Timber Rattlesnake) is extirpated.

Each species account is dominated by an enlarged colour drawing of an adult, and these vary from very good to embarrassingly bad. Some of the snakes, turtles and frogs are among the excellent, some salamanders and virtually all the lizards are poor, the latter particularly washed-out, among other faults. The Common Garter Snake represented seems to be a particularly odd colour pattern (a Pacific region variant?) that will be unrecognized in most of the country. The Plains Garter Snake is very pale, typical of the southern and eastern portions of the range mostly beyond Canada, while the “Eastern Ribbon Snake” on the next page matches the majority of Canadian specimens of plains species. In Canada, Ribbon Snakes rarely have an orange dorsal stripe (I know of only one report) like the one pictured; the lateral stripe is usually prominently bordered below by chocolate, and overall it is more slender. Among other snakes particularly poorly done are the Red-bellied, Brown, and Green snakes. The species accounts themselves lead with English and scientific names followed by a casual informal introduction, then a paragraph ID (identification), and one or two lines on Length, Distribution (with a tiny map of Canadian range), Habitat, Activity Patterns, Reproduction, Food, Similar Species, French Name, and a Did You Know sidebar, the latter focussed on some additional fact regarded as particularly remarkable. Each native and existing species is given two facing pages. The marine turtles (designated “vagrant species”) fare even less well, with only a half page each, and the introduced or extirpated ones only somewhat better at one page each. The format of necessity means that only the briefest information can be given for each. Sometimes these have little Canadian relevance. An example is the statement

that the Small-mouthed Salamander “often” shares breeding ponds with Spotted Salamanders. Presumably this applies to United States populations as in Canada the Small-mouthed Salamander has been recorded only on Pelee Island where Spotted Salamanders apparently do not occur. But omitted from the Small-mouthed Salamander account is mention of its extensive hybridization with Blue-spotted Salamanders on Pelee Island although elsewhere the hybridization of Blue-spotted with Jefferson salamanders is recognized.

On the positive side, this book does have all the species we know in Canada to date with distributions, many interesting highlights, and very colourful pictures. These will be found useful by some casually interest-

ed uncritical naturalists. However, it is no substitute for the many carefully researched and more comprehensive, within their more limited areas covered, provincial guides available for amphibians and reptiles.

Literature Cited

- Bumstead, Pat E.** 2003. Canadian skin and scales: A complete encyclopedia of Canadian amphibians and reptiles. Simply Wild Publications Inc., Calgary, Alberta. 161 pages.
- Cook, F. R.** 1984. Introduction to Canadian amphibians and reptiles. National Museum of Natural Sciences, National Museums of Canada. 200 pages.

FRANCIS R. COOK

Emeritus Curator and Researcher, Canadian Museum of Nature, P.O. Box 3443, Station D, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 6P4 Canada

Guides and Reference to the (1) Snakes, (2) Crocodylians, Turtles, and Lizards (3) Amphibians, of Eastern and Central North America (North of Mexico)

By R. C. Bartlett and Patricia P. Bartlett. 2005 (1), 2006(2&3). University Press of Florida, 15 NW 15th Street, Gainesville, Florida 32611. 342 (1), 316 (2), 283 (3) pages. 29.95 USD each.

The Bartlett team has produced a number of earlier books: *A Field Guide to Florida Reptiles, Reptiles and Amphibians of the Amazon: An Ecotourists Guide* (2003), and *Florida Snakes: A Guide to Their Identification and Habits* (2003). R. D. Bartlett, veteran herpetoculturist/herpetologist, founder of the Reptilian Breeding and Research Institute, boasts over 40 years writing and photographing, including more than 500 articles in magazines such as *The Tropical Fish Hobbyist*, *Reptiles*, and *Reptile and Amphibian*. Patricia Bartlett, former director of the Fort Myers Historical Museum, is an editor and writer who, in addition to coauthoring 12 books with R.D.B., also wrote *A Dictionary of Sharks*.

In these present volumes, the Bartletts have broadened their horizons and compiled a herpetofauna reference in three volumes which cover the entire eastern and central United States and adjacent Canada from the Atlantic to the tier of mid-western states from North Dakota to Texas. However, their southern bias persists. Species which range far north of the U.S. border have only the southern portion of their Canadian range shown on the generally crude distribution maps which only casually outline Canada, with the northern portions of the Canadian-based range are often cut off. No Canadian-based authors are included in the references, despite the many that have studied species included, some even from U.S. populations as well as Canadian material.

Each book has a brief Species List, a Preface and Introduction to the group(s) included. The bulk of the texts are accounts arranged by family and within these by related groups of species, and then individual species accounts. The later includes English and Scientific name followed by sections on Toxicity/Disposition (Snakes), Abundance/Range, Habitat, Size, Identifying features, Voice (in crocodylians and frogs), and Similar Species, Comments, and Additional Subspecies. There is a rather eclectic selection here sometimes of subspecies far to the west of the limits set for the book. There is a distribution map (see comment above), and one or more colour photographs for each species (regrettably without localities or date), but usually of spectacular quality, and it here that the book shines, and wins a place on many shelves.

But why, aside from this, would any Canadian naturalist want these books on their shelf? They do include all the species in eastern Canada, as all of these range north into this country from the United States. These accounts are of reference value for depictions of appearance (many species pictured are different from the Canadian variants) and natural history (contrast from more southern habitats) of these species in areas adjacent to Canada and beyond.

Attractive as it is, it is primarily an add-on for Canadian naturalists unless they are travelling south, and for practical purposes there are now many Canadian and adjacent state guides to reptiles and amphibians combined in single volumes that will be more useful references for identifying our herpetofauna.

FRANCIS R. COOK

Emeritus Curator and Researcher, Canadian Museum of Nature, P.O. Box 3443, Station D, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 6P4 Canada