

MISCELLANEOUS

Contributions to the History of Herpetology Volume 2

Edited by Kraig Adler. Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles, Post Office Box 58517 Salt Lake City, Utah 84158-0517 USA. 396 pages. 65.00 USD Cloth.

This is volume 21 in the Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles series *Contributions to Herpetology* begun in 1980. The first history contribution, number 5 in the series, was published in 1989 to commemorate the First World Congress of Herpetology held in Canterbury, England, that year. It contained biographies of 152 "Herpetologists of the Past" compiled by Alder using two criteria for inclusion: (1) significant contribution to herpetology and (2) deceased. Its scope was world-wide and included references for each biography, signatures, and 149 portraits. The book concludes with index to 2500 authors in taxonomic herpetology compiled by John S. Applegarth, and academic lineages of 1300 herpetologists by Robert Altig. It was 202 pages and priced at \$20. It is now out of print but it has been put on the web for public access at www.ssar-herps.org (click on "Publications"). The new volume extends the coverage of the first and has biographies of 285 additional Past Herpetologists (with signatures and 269 portraits) by Adler. Following sections are an index to 3604 taxonomic authors (again by Applegarth), and academic lineages of 3810 herpetologists (again authored by Altig). The price, in keeping with the times, has more than tripled. Like the first, this is also a commemorative volume, issued for the Society's 50th Anniversary Meeting, St. Louis, 2007.

The new biographies are comprised of both long-deceased herpetologists omitted in the earlier edition and recent ones who have died since the first was written. The accounts are grouped by 26 variable time periods from 1400-1500 to 1970-1990 with placement within each period based on when the person first became prominent in herpetology. Fortunately, there is an index (pages 259-273) covering both volumes that includes page numbers not only for the 437 subjects of individual biographies but also every mention of these and other herpetologists. The bibliographies in volume 2 begin with Leoniceno (1428-1524) and conclude with Slowinski (1962-2001). The most recent additions are John L. Behler (1943-2006) and Margaret M. Stewart (1927-2006). Canadians, represented by E. B. S. Logier (1893-1979) in the initial volume, have one more entry in the second, Stanley W.

Gorham (1917-1984). Stan's career was spent at the National Museum of Canada (now Canadian Museum of Nature) and the New Brunswick Museum and he authored, among other contributions, a checklist of amphibians of the world (1974). Its value is recognized here: "Even when a larger, more comprehensive checklist appeared in 1985, authored by a team of 59 specialists from 20 countries, Gorham's single-authored, simpler list still had the advantage of including synonyms and subspecies and remained a useful reference for many years". [See also 1991 tribute in *Canadian Field-Naturalist* 105: 592-596]. Adler continues to augment his files and there will be many more Canadians represented in a future volume 3 and beyond when the those so active from 1960 to the present are finally eligible for inclusion.

Interest in all corners of the history of biology has come of age and editor Adler is well suited to the task of documenting the herpetological research component. He is Professor of Biology and former Vice Provost for Life Sciences at Cornell University, Ithaca, New York. He has been President of the SSAR and was founding Secretary-General of the World Congress of Herpetology. He has published extensively on behaviour and systematics of amphibians and reptiles in scientific journals and books. He has been, and remains, a driving force in the hyperactive Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles since its foetal days as the Ohio Herpetological Society and the publication of its first journal (1959-1966). He has promoted and edited both the Facsimile Reprints in Herpetology series (41 ranging from pamphlets to books) and the Contributions series as well as being a supporter of varied other publications of the Society: *The Catalogue of Amphibians and Reptiles* (840 accounts to date), *Herpetological Conservation* (2 volumes dealing with Canadian amphibians (1) 1997 and reptiles (2) 2007), *The Herpetological Review* (1967-, at volume 37 in 2006), *Journal of Herpetology* (1968-, at volume 40 in 2006) and *Herpetological Circulars* (1973-, 36 numbers to 2007).

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Science and Conservation of Vernal Pools in Northeastern North America

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Some time ago the public began to notice that urban and private development had started to encroach upon

lands which had traditionally been identified as wasteland, swamps and bogs. Habitat was being lost with the destruction of breeding grounds of birds, fish and many mammals to create shoreline, developed areas in subdivisions and agricultural lands where the previous condition of the land had been determined to be "too wet".