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Review

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REVIEWS

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Humphrey, Stephen R. (ed.). 1992. RARE AND ENDANGERED BIOTA OF FLORIDA, VOLUME 1. MAMMALS. University Press of Florida, Gainesville: xxviii + 392 pp., illus. ISBN-0-8130-1127-2 (hardcover) \$59.95, ISBN-0-8130-1128-0 (paper) \$26.95.

“The biological communities of this state are being compromised time and again by all levels of government. . . .”

Ray E. Ashton, Jr.

Wildlife conservation has become grotesquely politicized. The quotation above, from the series editor, appears in the preface to this book. Its ringing truth is all too well known to those deeply involved with wildlife conservation in Florida. Perhaps no other state offers such amazing mammalian diversity, endemism, and jeopardy all at once. Perhaps nowhere else around the world is the politicization of conservation effort so acute and so detrimental to the species requiring attention. In Florida, federal, state, county, and municipal governments vie for authority, and regional chauvinisms further cleave the scientific ranks into warring factions. It may be the same all over, from Puerto Rican parrot to spotted owl, but it all seems to reach its acme in Florida.

That makes some sad sense. Probably nowhere else are human population and development pressures so immediately juxtaposed to critical endangered species habitats. Nowhere else are such enormous sums of money at stake when it comes to resisting the draining of a swamp or the clearing of a woodland. These pressures combined with all the disparities of factionalism have more than touched this book: they have bent it out of all proportion.

Those looking for up-to-date, even, and knowledgeable treatments of Florida's most interesting mammals will—in the main—have to look again, elsewhere. The problem in a nutshell is informational vacua: the enormity of what has been left out. A wave of dramatic and important material on Florida's rare and endangered mammals began appearing in the late 1980's and continues to flow. Indeed, some of it has found its way into the present volume, but far too little.

There are some 91 citations to literature published 1989–91. One third of that total, 30 works, are cited in just five of the 43 species accounts—less than 12 percent of the total. These five accounts contain all ten 1991 references in the volume. These five accounts are all of those on cetaceans, authored by Daniel K. Odell. Unfortunately, these cetaceans, wonderful as they are, are not especially relevant to the worst problems of habitat destruction facing most endangered mammals in Florida. Were all authors permitted to update their accounts?

Editor Humphrey himself authored (or coauthored) more than one quarter of the accounts. These contain some 20 references to 1989–90 publications. However, seven of the ten 1990 citations are to a single work: a state-published list. (Indeed, 75 percent of all the 1990 citations in the entire volume are to this list.) Three of the species Humphrey dealt with received detailed treatment elsewhere (Goodyear, 1991; Lazell, 1989; see Layne, 1991).

These accounts reflect a geographic schism in Florida that contributes mightily to destructive factionalism: tropical Florida—the Everglades and Keys—versus the Gainesville–Tallahassee axis. Historically, and to the present, tropical Florida has received the attentions of specialists from way up North who have a solidly West Indian bent: Samuel Garman, Glover Allen, Thomas Barbour, Albert Schwartz, James Lazell, Numi Goodyear—to list a few. These tend to be anathema to the specialists from just up north, in the Deep South. It would all make for a most amusing sociological study if it were not so tragic for the animals caught up in the crossfire.

There are nine endemic mammals in the Florida Keys; accounts for six of them appear in this book (although one, *Oryzomys argentatus*, is not mentioned or even indexed by that name). Treatments for all of these are woefully out-of-date. For example, Elizabeth Forsys, a doctoral candidate under editor Humphrey at the University of Florida, has been on the ground studying the Key rabbit, (*Sylilagus palustris hefneri*) since February 1991. She has produced several documents, including semiannual reports submitted directly to Humphrey (pers. comm., 19 September 1992). Any of these are as citable and retrievable as the unpublished typescripts by Howe and Schwartz listed in the account of this rabbit. Surely

James Wolfe, now resident in Kansas, who wrote this account and bemoaned the lack of so much data now available, should have been advised of Forsys' work; perhaps he would have concluded a coauthored account was appropriate. Wolfe reports (pers. comm., 19 September 1992) that the editor never brought the subject up.

Some taxonomic issues require comment. Series editor Ashton stated (pers. comm., 17 September 1992) that taxonomic controversies were to be avoided as a matter of policy and authors were to use "taxonomy government recognizes." Ashton did not say what government; federal and state lists differ. Ironically, the only frequently cited 1990 work in the book is the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission's "official list" which was not followed in several cases (e.g., *Mustela vison evergladensis*; *Oryzomys argentatus*). Nevertheless, many accounts do mention taxonomic uncertainties and that is very useful to the reader (e.g., Odell's comments on *Balaena* versus *Eubalaena* and the species of right whales in the latter).

Some generic names are not universally accepted. For example, "*Podomys*" for *Peromyscus floridanus* renders *Peromyscus* paraphyletic. If recognized, it will only be a matter of time before some cladist splits *Peromyscus* into a dozen "genera" based on the sorts of indefinite modalities and occasional characters that are currently used for groups of species. This will plunge us into yet another mess of taxonomic turmoil, featuring undefined "genera."

In another sort of case, many do not accept the use of the name *Odocoileus* for the deer genus *Dama*. Klimstra does mention the problem in his account of the Key deer, but in a wholly one-sided manner. At least Klimstra does, in passing, allude to the species-level status of this endemic deer: "... Key deer show distinction beyond race level." He does not cite the available morphometric evidence for character divergence vis-à-vis mainland Florida whitetails (Lazell, 1989: 42).

Perhaps the saddest case is that of the Everglades mink. Here the question of which government's list is adopted becomes crucial. Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission (1990) lists *Mustela vison evergladensis* as a valid form, but Humphrey and Setzer (1989) attempted to sink it. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (1989) follows Humphrey and Setzer (1989). However, Humphrey and Setzer did not even consider the

pelage character given as diagnostic in the original description of the form, and their results confirm the distinctiveness of the last molar, also noted as important by its describer. How can one take seriously a synonymy based on characters never claimed to be important in the first place?

All this matters because without its own taxonomic identity the Everglades mink would only be eligible for federal endangered status as a "population." Granting endangered status to a mere population is exceedingly unlikely. Without federal endangered status, no critical habitat designation will be made. The financial benefits to a few private landowners, especially in Collier County, could be spectacular if critical habitat designation can be avoided.

As Hurricane Andrew so devastatingly demonstrated, Florida is a grossly overpopulated and overdeveloped state. Had conservation issues and wildlife habitat values been earlier understood, and had the various government agencies worked in concert to promulgate and enforce sound legal limits on agricultural and residential developments, much human misery could have been avoided. There will be much more to come. Only governments can be expected to require adherence to long-term benefit plans at the expense of short-term monetary gains.

The situation in Florida cries out for in-depth exposé attention from some external group. In case after case, the federal authorities have abnegated their duties (Key wood rat, Key cotton mouse) and turned things over to the state. Often, no state employee is in a position to take action or garner information in any manner approaching that of some federal employee or biologist working on a federal contract (Key rabbit). All too often, any government agency involved seems in principle to seek to avoid taking action or enforcing the law, and will clutch at straws to do so. Therefore, every declaration of taxonomic invalidity, extinction, or abundance in spite of opinions to the contrary, must be viewed with extreme skepticism. Publishing incomplete, out-of-date accounts which omit dissenting views may lead to financial, but not scientific gain.

A large number of colleagues took the time to answer questions about this book and its preparation. Notably, George Bedell, Director, University Press of Florida, states that (as Odell's accounts prove) updates and minor revisions can be accommodated to within a few months of publication. Authors of accounts in other vol-

umes of this series should be aware of this so as to act in their own self interest. This work is dedicated to the memory of the late Albert Schwartz, pioneer in Florida mammalogy.—**JAMES LAZELL**, *The Conservation Agency, 6 Swinburne Street, Jamestown, Rhode Island 02835*.

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Redford, K. H., and J. F. Eisenberg. 1992. *MAMMALS OF THE NEOTROPICS, VOLUME 2. THE SOUTHERN CONE: CHILE, ARGENTINA, URUGUAY, PARAGUAY*. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, ix + 430 pp + 1 unnumbered page + 18 pls. ISBN 0-226-70681-8 (cloth), ISBN 0-226-70682-6 (paper). Price (cloth) \$95.00, (paper) \$39.50.

This work follows the format of the first volume (Eisenberg, 1989) in the series. After an introduction and a chapter on biogeography of southern South America, there follow eleven chapters, each dealing with an order of mammals. These are succeeded by chapters entitled “Mammalian Community Ecology in Southern South America” (containing a disproportionately detailed account of canid ecology) and “The Effects of Humans on the Mammalian Fauna of Southern South America.” Each chapter has its own “References” section rather than there being a terminal general bibliography for the whole book. There are two indexes, one to “Scientific Names,” the other to “Common Names” (both English and Spanish). The former treats supra-generic and generic names, with species names listed under each genus. Synonyms are not usually included in this index, and, when they are, they are generally in parentheses, following the

name accepted in the text by the authors. All page citations given in the indexes are only for the primary formal treatment of each taxon, and any mention of a name which appears elsewhere in the text (including the last two chapters) is not cited. A series of statements making up one or more paragraphs in a species account is generally followed by a bunched-up listing of literature sources for all the information given in the paragraph(s); this means that the reader often cannot know which citation goes with which information. There are ten plates of black-and-white drawings of (mostly) whole animals and eight similar plates of colored drawings. Scattered throughout the text are line-and-stipple drawings of skulls of selected species and a few (mostly) line drawings, usually of whole animals. In addition to several maps showing special features, localities of record for nearly every species covered in the book are shown in maps appropriately placed in the text. Marine mammals are included as well as land mammals. With few exceptions, only coastline records are plotted for the marine mammals.

Many of the species treated in the first volume, which covered Panamá and several northern South American countries, also occur in southern South America, and, in the second volume, each of these receives a second treatment. Some figures of animals (both black-and-white and colored) appear in both volumes, while other species are figured in both volumes but the drawings are different.

The taxonomic treatment is said to follow that of the decade-old Honacki, Kinman, and Koepl (1982) except for certain specified genera. This statement is not completely accurate, however. For example, Handley’s (1989) conclusions are used in the treatment of the large *Artibeus*, and three, rather than two, species of *Galictis* are recognized. Patterson et al. (1984) are followed with regard to certain *Akodon*. There seems to be no rhyme or reason to which post-1982 revisionary treatments were followed and which ones ignored.

Although the Islas Malvinas (or Falklands) are included in all range maps and records for marine mammals are plotted there, the Falklands “wolf” (*Dusicyon australis*) is not treated in this book aside from its being briefly mentioned on p. 144.

Each order, family, and genus receives its own coverage, with such subheadings as “Diagnosis,” “Distribution,” “[Pre]History and Classifica-