of publication (e.g., Ophisiaurus gracilis is now Dopsia gracilis). O. S. G. Pauwels and L. L. Grismer (2015. Herpetological Review 46:436–459) provide a thorough treatment of the shortcomings and errata of this volume, carefully pointing out missing and erroneous information regarding taxonomy, behavior, ecology, and systematics.

Based on comments in the introduction, a Thai language version of this book is anticipated in the coming years. A Thai edition will be especially helpful and will hopefully encourage the pursuit of formal and informal studies of the country’s rich herpetofauna by those who live there and in the surrounding region. A brief history of herpetology in Thailand is provided, but much of this focuses on the work of foreigners and neglects the accomplishments of past and present Thai herpetologists. In recent decades a growing number of Thai researchers have pursued taxonomic, ecological, biogeographical, and evolutionary studies of their nation’s herpetofaunal diversity. They have contributed much to the field, and have successfully mentored local, regional, and international students.

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Honduras is home to a fascinating array of Anolis species, from the lanky giant A. loveridgei to the impossibly sexy male and female pair of A. john-meyeri. Many of the endemic forms were described by McCranie and Köhler, and thus it is fitting that these authors have drawn from their years of experience in Honduras to produce a magnum opus of Honduran anoles. Their monograph is mainly a systematic review of all species of Anolis found in Honduras, but also includes extensive sections on distribution and conservation, a dichotomous key, and brief discussions of anole relationships and the history of studies of Honduran Anolis. An instant classic, it succeeds in being a comprehensive summary of Anolis in Honduras.

The treatment is detailed and, most importantly, useful. The welcome and impressive qualities of this monograph—for each species—include: dot maps; male dewlap and body photographs; drawings of head scales; full synonymies; and descriptions. This

June 2016

NEW BIOLOGICAL BOOKS


A Field Guide to the Reptiles of Thailand is a concise, yet reasonably thorough field-worthy book that will be of value to herpetologists and naturalists, whether amateur or professional, exploring the rich reptile fauna of Thailand. A total of 352 species of turtles, snakes, and lizards are described and most are illustrated with hand-drawn color illustrations that occasionally include depictions of sexually dimorphic characters (e.g., male dewlaps in Draco sp.). Small, stylized distribution maps are provided for each species and taxonomic keys are provided for some families and most genera. The first portion of the book contains helpful illustrations and definitions for many of the morphological characters used throughout. A brief overview of the regional variations in geography and forest types is provided in addition to some discussion of conservation of amphibians, reptiles, and the environments that they inhabit.

The authors provide both scientific nomenclature and common names for the species presented. Common names follow those of J. Nabhitabhata et al. (2000. Checklist of Amphibians and Reptiles in Thailand. Bangkok (Thailand): Office of Environmental Policy and Planning), a Thai government publication not widely available. No common names are given in Thai, something a few previous volumes have provided (e.g., Cox et al. 2012). This is unfortunate given that it is a book aimed for use in the field where it would be helpful to show pictures and Thai names to locals familiar with the animals. No discussion is provided regarding the authors’ justification for the scientific nomenclature used, some of which was outdated at the time
information is extremely valuable for workers in the field. It had to have been a massive undertaking to compile and present these data for every species of Honduran Anolis. When combined with natural history notes and discussion of anoles with respect to physiographic regions, this makes for an indispensable tool for any herpetologist working in Honduras. The scale drawings and maps are clear and informative, and the photographs (with the exception of a few dark examples) are very good.

The utility of this work far outweighs its limitations. However, as a reviewer and unabashed anole geek I would be remiss in not pointing out issues that detract from an otherwise solid contribution to science. The first limitation is the use of Norops. The recycled justifications for this practice in this book have all been debunked (see M. D. Castañeda and K. de Queiroz. 2013. Bulletin of the Museum of Comparative Zoology 160:345–398; S. Poe. 2013. Zootaxa 3626:295–299). The reasons that the authors give for recognizing Norops (strong support for monophyly, supposed “distinctiveness” of members of the genus) apply moreso to Anolis (sensu lato), and there is no scientific reason to switch to the new Nicholson et al. (2012. Zootaxa 3477:1–108) taxonomy or one of the thousands of other permutations that name monophyletic anole groups as genera—see, e.g., Poe’s 10-genus scheme (2014: Figure 1) over the well-entrenched use of Anolis for the entire anole clade.

The second limitation is a failure to reassess the species validity of some questionable forms. I am unable to distinguish the following Anolis species pairs in the field using traits suggested as diagnostic by the authors, or using any other traits (I have collected each in life, in most cases topotypically): beckeri-utillensis, limbifrons-zeus, humilis-quaggulus, and laeviventer-kreuzti. For example, we collected topotypical A. zeus with limbifrons-like dewlaps (the only trait purported to distinguish them), and topotypical A. utillensis with caudal sculation that is indistinguishable from that of A. beckeri. The purported diagnostic traits of A. utillensis have changed over time (compare the original diagnosis of A. utillensis; G. Köhler. 1996. Senckenbergiana Biologica 76:19–28) to that of this volume and the authors note that some individuals they assign to A. zeus lack the single diagnostic trait of the species (p. 98). Thus, as McCranie and Köhler seem aware of at least some of these issues, it would have been valuable for them to draw attention to these problematic species—as the authors did with the questionable A. wampuen- sis—rather than to proceed as if the status of each is unassailable. An excellent framework of Honduran anole taxonomy has been erected by McCranie, Köhler, and others, but there is a lot of room for additional taxonomic work on Honduran anoles.

The next limitation is an unnecessary plea for the use of scale data in phylogenetic analyses of Anolis. The authors simultaneously note that some researchers have used scale data in Anolis phylogenetics (p. 5) and spend four pages lamenting the lack of scale data in Anolis phylogenetics (pp. 4–7). This puzzling juxtaposition is reminiscent of Rick James’ response when accused of grinding his dirty feet on Eddie Murphy’s couch: “Come on, what am I gonna do? Just all of a sudden jump up and grind my feet on somebody’s couch like it’s something to do? Come on. I got a little more sense then that. Yeah, I remember grinding my feet on Eddie’s couch” (R. James in D. Chappelle. 2004. Charlie Murphy’s True Hollywood Stories. Season 2, Episode 4).

The final limitation is concerned with unsupported conservation assertions. The authors claim that 10 of 39 Honduran Anolis species are “vulnerable” or “endangered” and three species are “declining.” But they present no long-term quantitative evidence for these claims. My own anecdotal observations of many of these purportedly endangered forms runs counter to the suggestions of McCranie and Köhler. For example, we found A. utillensis to be highly abundant in disturbed habitat on Útila, and we have observed large numbers of individuals of A. cusco and A. amplisquamosus during brief visits to Cuscuco National Park. Many researchers tend toward caution regarding conservation assessments when data on long-term population trends are unavailable. This tendency is noble in spirit but unfortunate in practice because in most countries, species-based conservation initiatives tend to hinder just one entity—scientists attempting to conduct research—and have no effect on the real estate developers and other destroyers of habitat who should be reined in (see also J. A. Campbell and D. R. Frost. 1993. Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History 216:1–121; J. V. Remsen. 1995. Bird Conservation International 5:145–180). The authors should have emphasized that their opinions are preliminary and based on anecdotal, albeit valuable, observations.

The above flaws notwithstanding, this volume is an invaluable resource for herpetologists working in Central America. It is an impressively comprehensive and useful summary of anole diversity in Honduras.

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