

Book Review: Wild About Reptiles. Field Guide to the Reptiles and Amphibians of the UAE

Wild About Reptiles. Field Guide to the Reptiles and Amphibians of the UAE, by Marycke Jongbloed, 2000. Barkers Trident Communications; London, 116 pp., numerous unnumbered color photographs. Order from Natural History Book Service: www.nhbs.com

This attractive little spiral-bound book is the first field guide to the amphibians and reptiles of the United Arab Emirates. Most of the 68 species covered are illustrated with good color photographs. There are no keys, but the color photographs will serve to identify most live specimens. Descriptions are sketchy and the emphasis is on natural history. The book should serve well as an introduction to desert reptiles, sea snakes and sea turtles, and the few amphibians of the region. English speakers who work in the Emirates, particularly members of the natural history societies, will find this a handy reference. Visiting herpetologists, while they will still want the keys and descriptions of Arnold (1986), Balletto, *et al.* (1986), Gasperetti (1988), Leviton and Anderson (1967), and Leviton, *et al.* (1992), will want this for quick identification. The technical papers that emphasize the herpetology of the Emirates are few in number (see Arnold, 1984; Leviton and Anderson,) and only Arnold (1984) concerns the ecology and natural history of this region of the Arabian Peninsula.

Jongbloed takes a highly personal and anecdotal approach in this book, demonstrating her enthusiasm for these creatures. She includes field notes taken by her friend, John Norman Bishop "Bish" Brown. Because so little professional herpetological work has been done in the Emirates, and those studies that have been carried out have dealt mainly with systematics, using preserved specimens, this book is almost the only source of natural history information for these groups in the UAE. The natural history observations are informal, but still, informative. The bibliography is sketchy and disappointing and will not lead the beginning naturalist very deeply into the literature of the UAE.

I recommend this field guide to any naturalist, professional or amateur, planning to travel to the UAE.

Anyone seriously interested in the herpetofauna of Southwest Asia in general or the Arabian Peninsula in particular will want this in his library.

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Literature Cited

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- Balletto, E., M. A. Cherchi, and J. Gasperetti. 1986. Amphibians of the Arabian Peninsula. *Fauna of Saudi Arabia* 7:318-392.
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- Leviton, A. E., S. C. Anderson, K. Adler, and S. A. Minton. 1992. *Handbook to Middle East Amphibians and Reptiles*. Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles, Oxford, Ohio, vii + 252 pp.

"The Field Herping Guide: Finding Amphibians and Reptiles in the Wild" by Mike Pingleton and Joshua May 2020 • Canadian Field Naturalist. David Seburn. View full-text. Article. Book Review:Type Specimens of Reptiles and Amphibians in the U. S. National Museum. Doris M. Cochran. September 1962 • The Quarterly Review of Biology. Charles M. Bogert. Read more. • Book Review:Simon & Schuster's Guide to Reptiles and Amphibians of the World. Massimo Capula, John L September 1990 • The Quarterly Review of Biology. Eric R. Pianka. Read more. Article. Full-text available. • "The Amphibians and Reptiles of Michigan: A Quaternary and Recent Faunal Adventure" by J. Alan Holma April 2013 • Canadian Field Naturalist. Francis R. Cook. Read more. Book Recommendation #4: Peterson Field Guide to Reptiles and Amphibians of Eastern and Central North America. Book Recommendation #5: Firefly Encyclopedia of Reptiles and Amphibians. Book Recommendation #1: Herpetology: An Introductory Biology on Amphibians and Reptiles. • The book has three authors who have backgrounds in ecology and sustainability so expect much of the subject matter to include how to protect and conserve amphibious and reptilian habitat. Reviewers of the book comment on how detailed the book is and on the high quality of the photographs. However, some reviewers found the handling and care information too basic for experienced reptile and amphibian owners. 1998 a field guide to reptiles and amphibians: eastern and central north america. 3rd edition expanded. Houghton-Mifflin, Boston. 616 pp. Cooke, Francis R. 1984 introduction to canadian amphibians and reptiles. National Museum of Natural Sciences, National Museums of Canada, Ottawa, Canada. 200 pp. Smith, Hobart M. 1978 AMPHIBIANS OF NORTH AMERICA: A Guide to Field Identification. Golden Press, New York. 160 pp. Smith, Hobart M. and Edmund D. Brodie. 1982 REPTILES OF NORTH AMERICA: A Guide to Field Identification. Golden Press, New York. 240 pp. Stebbins, Robert C. 2003 field guide to western reptiles The Field Herping Guide: Finding Amphibians and Reptiles in the Wild (Wormsloe Foundation Nature Book Ser.) Mike Pingleton. 4.9 out of 5 stars 63. Paperback. 1 offer from \$40.43. Smithsonian Handbooks: Reptiles and Amphibians (Smithsonian Handbooks) (DK Smithsonian Handbook). Mark O'Shea. 4.8 out of 5 stars 155. Flexibound. \$18.74. Herpetology: An Introductory Biology of Amphibians and Reptiles. Laurie J. Vitt. 4.6 out of 5 stars 78. Hardcover. \$67.41. • MICHAEL A. SMITH is the cofounder of the Dallas-Fort Worth Herpetological Society and often teaches herpetology to local classes of master naturalists. By day, he is a licensed psychological associate and lives in Arlington, Texas. Product details. A reptile and amphibian field guide is a fun book that can be used to learn about the world around you. For general use, you can thumb through the pages and read about the different species. And if you see a snake slither beneath your front porch, you can grab your handy field guide and look it up. • Since you will be using your reptile and amphibian field guide to identify animals that you see in the wild, you want plenty of photos and artwork detailing different views or characteristics of each reptile or amphibian, and the more the better. If you have trouble determining colors and markings in the illustrations, you may find it impossible to accurately identify the species that you see.