

## BOOK REVIEW

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NAME THAT ANIMAL, A GUIDE TO THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE COMMON LAND AND FRESH-WATER ANIMALS OF THE UNITED STATES, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE AREA EAST OF THE ROCKIES, by Ernest C. Driver, 527 pp., E. C. Driver, Smith College, Northampton, Mass., 1942. Price \$5.00.

To present, in a single volume, an adequate guide to the fauna of the United States, from protozoans to mammals, is an ambitious project. It is of course impossible to make a complete coverage of all groups. A reasonable compromise is to confine the treatment of groups for which abundant guides exist, or which require the services of an expert and abundant reference material, to a general discussion and outline of classification; and to devote most of the available space to a fuller treatment of the remaining groups. This course Prof. Driver has followed with considerable success. The Protozoa, Porifera, Coelenterata, Bryozoa, Gastotricha, and Rotifera are taken to genus. The flatworms, roundworms, and annelids are treated in varying degrees of completeness. The principal genera and common species of molluscs are considered. Amongst the arthropods, the insects are taken to order only; the arachnids to genus in the scorpions, to family in the spiders, and to order elsewhere; the remaining classes key down to genus. Coming to the vertebrates we find that the birds are briefly discussed and an outline of the classification presented, but that identification is not attempted. In the remaining classes keys to the principal species are included. In the case of certain complexes the reader is referred to other works for complete identification.

The book concludes with brief chapters on eggs and on tracks.

The keys appear to be simple and reliable. Like most usable keys they are artificial to a considerable extent. As, however, they are preceded by an outline of the classification of the group in question, the student should have little difficulty in building up a picture of the relationships. Some attention has been given

to the danger of certain organisms being sought in the wrong group; e.g. the legless lizards are found in the snake key as well as with the lizards.

A fairly uniform system of illustration by line drawings has been adopted, diagrams illustrating diagnostic characters of the group and then a number of examples being given. Line drawings are certainly the best means of illustrating such a book, but a good many of these appear to have been simplified to the point where they have little value. For example, it seems safe to assume that any reader has already as clear a mental picture of a squirrel as that given by the drawing of a gray squirrel. In some cases it might have been preferable to have devoted the same amount of space to small sketches illustrating distinguishing features of similar species. No scales are given for any illustrations save those of tracks. The lack of dimensions for the lower forms will hinder the beginner.

The binding, paper, and printing are good, though the occasional accidental line of bold-face type in a few keys is mildly disturbing and irregular lettering detracts from the appearance of many plates. Waterproof covers would be an improvement in a book designed for field use.

The lack of any index and of cross-referencing between keys and illustrations is a hindrance to anyone wishing to find the proper name of any animal known by common name only. Furthermore, the beginner would feel more certain of his ground if, after keying down to species, he found a brief description of the animal. However, the extra space involved would probably have required division of the work into two volumes, and the author makes it plain that the user is expected to refer to one or more of the cited works for final confirmation. For a single volume the scheme adopted is probably all that could be asked.

This book should prove of considerable value to biology teachers in schools and small colleges, to private naturalists, and to all those with limited reference facilities.

— D. B. O. SAVILE





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