

BOOKREVIEW

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The snakes of Iran. By: M. Latifi, 1991. English edition. Published by Society for the Study of Amphibians and reptiles, U.S.A. 165 p., 22 colour plates. \$ US 22.00.

Originally published in Iran in 1985, in Farsi, this book is the first comprehensive, fully illustrated treatment of the snakes of Iran, and its presentation in English by SSAR is surely welcomed by many herpetologists worldwide.

The herpetofauna of South West Asia (Turkey to Sinai and east to Iran) is a fascinating and interesting fauna which has been greatly neglected to date, considering the closeness to and ease of travel from, mainland Europe. So I was greatly interested to obtain a copy for perusal.

The book opens with the standard General Information with basic notes on behaviour, physical structure, habits, brief overview of venoms, first aid for snake envenomation, antivenins, etc. This is followed by a checklist, crossed with a checklist per province of Iran. Then follows the bulk of the book which comprises for each snake description, length, diet, reproduction, habitat and distribution. The book is supplemented with (compared to the original) an additional bibliography and a table of taxonomic equivalents so efficiently prepared by A.E. Leviton and G.R. Zug.

The book obviously fills a gap in the market for readily available information in that being in English and available outside Iran its actual existence will be more known. As for the publishers the quality of paper and general production surely call for our thanks and continued support of all members, past present and future.

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Snakes of the Agkistrodon complex: A monographic review. By: Gloyd, H.K. & R. Conant. Published by Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles. 620 p., 33 colour plates, 20 black and white, 60 figs., 6 charts and 28 maps. \$ US 75.

There is little one can say of this book which many of us have known for years has been continually worked on by two of this century's greatest contributors to herpetology. The book is a comprehensive treatment of 33 taxa of pitvipers, to include *Agkistrodon*, *Calloselasma*, *Deinagkistrodon* and *Hypnale*, supported by nine supplementary chapters each superb in their own right. It is and will remain a classic both in its contents and in the style which the authors and publishers have presented it to us. It is an essential book for all serious students in herpetology for both its completeness in contents on a group of fascinating and beautiful snakes and as a superb example on the presentation of information.