

that includes mainland Labrador (accounting for the salamanders included), or that the generally arctic Nunavut extends south to include islands in Hudson Bay (accounting for the occurrence of a frog and a toad in the territory).

The foreword, an endorsement by Carolyn and David Seburn, rightly extols the book for its overriding themes of excitement in observing amphibians and reptiles, the need to treat them with respect, and the importance of conserving their habitats. But they overlook, or were unaware of, problems precipitated by generalizations and simplifications while copying information from the literature apparently without personal experience with many forms. Particularly misleading in all frog and toad accounts is that the num-

ber of eggs is followed by an "adults appear" which actually refers to when tadpoles transform, the resulting froglets are not "adults" (mature) for months or another year or more later. For all toads, spadefoots, and treefrogs only the aquatic habitats where they breed are given under "where they live" whereas most are terrestrial much of the year. Unfortunately, such "information" is as easily absorbed by the unwary and uncritical beginner as fact, and detracts from the otherwise commendable concept and aim of the effort.

FRANCIS R. COOK

Canadian Museum of Nature, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 6P4
Canada

Conservation and Ecology of Turtles of the Mid-Atlantic Region: A Symposium

Edited by Christopher W. Swarth, Willem M. Roosenburg and Erik Kiviat. 2004. Bibliomania! books@bibliomania.com. 122 pages. U.S. \$22.50.

The Mid-Atlantic region of the USA (from Virginia to New York) is an area of exceptional turtle diversity, with 22 species (including four sea turtles). It is also an area under exceptional development pressure. A two-day conference was organized to discuss the status and ecology of the species affected and held in October 1999.

This volume brings together 11 peer-reviewed papers and 18 abstracts from the conference. The book begins with an introduction by the editors and the text of a keynote address by Michael Klemens, who briefly summarizes the conclusions from his book *Turtle Conservation* (2000; Smithsonian Institution Press). The papers cover only six of the possible species occurring in the area, with three papers on each of the Diamondback Terrapin and the Box Turtle, two on the Red-bellied Turtle and one each on the Blanding's Turtle, Bog Turtle, and Spotted Turtle. The papers cover a wide range of topics including nest predation, head-starting, habitat change detection, and population

ecology. Although the papers are peer-reviewed, they are of varying quality. One of the papers is barely more than a page in length and is little more than a report on the number of turtles caught at one site. From a conservation perspective, the most interesting paper is by Erik Kiviat (one of the editors) and various collaborators and deals with the response of Blanding's Turtles to wetland and upland habitat creation as part of a wetland mitigation project. Although the results are still preliminary (three years) Blanding's Turtles made use of constructed nesting sites and wetlands. It is interesting, however, that the turtles did not choose to overwinter in constructed wetlands.

This collection is not the definitive statement on the conservation of turtles in the eastern U.S. There are no papers (although some abstracts) on many topics, such as traffic mortality, or the effects of toxins, or genetic isolation. Nonetheless, it is a valuable snapshot of the wide range of activities being undertaken and it will be of interest to anyone involved in turtle conservation.

DAVID SEBURN

Seburn Ecological Services, 920 Mussell Road, RR 1, Oxford Mills, Ontario K0G 1S0 Canada

For Love of Insects

By Thomas Eisner. 2003. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press. Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, England. 464 pages. U.S. \$29.95. Cloth.

Thomas Eisner is an entomological legend. His photo, on the dust jacket of this fine book, shows a middle-aged man cockily riding his bicycle, seated backward on the handle bars. Eisner is to entomology what Richard Feynman was to physics — brilliant, quirky, and full of good stories. If, for some reason, you need to be convinced of the fact that insects are among the most amazing creatures on earth, this is the book for you.

The preface to this book of insect tales compares Thomas Eisner to Jean-Henri Fabre, the pioneer writer on insect behaviour, who lived in the 19th century in the

south of France. E. O. Wilson, the preface's author, seems comfortable with this comparison, but to me they are two very different sorts of scientists. Fabre was a poor man, and a loner. His observations were conducted with no institutional support, and his genius (Darwin called him "the incomparable observer") was not recognized until Fabre was a very old man. Eisner, by contrast, is a hot-shot researcher at the top of his game, at what is probably the finest university for insect studies in North America (Cornell, in Ithaca, New York), surrounded by cooperative peers, graduate students, and lots of grant money. While Fabre's stories tell of hardship and isolation, Eisner's explore the life of a modern biologist in the publish-or-perish world of research science. (Publishing, by the way,