

The population of FHA in Similipal Tiger Reserve forms an example to the concern expressed by Rice (1991) that with intensification and spread of human impacts FHA populations are becoming increasingly isolated. The rate of the sighting of FHA in Similipal has become occasional, and the population is subjected to adverse human impacts. Yet, FHA is considered to be safer in Similipal than anywhere else in its eastern ranges because of various management practices implemented under Project Tiger, Project Elephant, Biosphere Reserve and Ecodevelopment Scheme.

References

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BOOK REVIEW

A Photographic Guide to Snakes and other Reptiles of India

By Indraneil Das

Published by New Holland Publishers (UK) Ltd, Garfield House, 8688 Edgware Road, London W2 2EA, United Kingdom, 2002. 144pp. (9.5 x 19cm).

Price: £7.99

This is the only coloured photographic guide to snakes and other reptiles of India. The author, Indraneil Das is one of the leading herpetologists, versatile character and a prolific writer. All his experience as a writer can be seen throughout the guide which is presented beautifully for the depth of the subject and language. There are over 270 colour photographs of 243 species of reptiles, including 110 species of snakes, 98 species of lizards, three species of crocodiles and 32 species of turtles and tortoises. The author has provided a brief description of the distinctive characters, habitat, habits and breeding information for all species and, as and when required, for subspecies along with a region-wise distribution.

All the 243 species have been updated with the latest information on valid scientific names. The quality of all the photographs is excellent except for those of Darjeeling Slender Snake (*Trachischium fuscus*) on page 46 and the Asian Giant Tortoise (*Manouria emys*) on page 136 which do not show diagnostic features. Breeding data where available has been included and where not available has been so mentioned, which is a very useful documentation. It is surprising, however, that the breeding habits of three species of Bataguridae: Indian Black Turtle (*Melanochelys trijuga*), Indian Roofed Turtle (*Pangshura tectum*) and Indian Tent Turtle (*P. tentoria*) are not provided in the guide although the same author in his own earlier publication (1995: *Turtles and Tortoise of India*. World Wide Fund) has included the information. Also if a map of India had been provided with its states or regions, it might have been very helpful for the readers to understand the distribution of the species.

In all, the much-needed photographic guide is beautifully produced and a worthy possession for beginners, students and wildlife enthusiasts. The size is quite appropriate for easy handling and carrying in the field.

Raju Vyas, Sayyaji Baug Zoo, Vadodara, Gujarat, India.