species almost unknown to European herpetologists are introduced, e.g. the easily kept Water snakes of the subfamily Homalopinae. I was excited about the two colour-varieties of Chrysopelea paradoxus and Trimeresurus purpureomaculatus which are surely unique! A portion of the photographs of the introductional material makes it clear that with those of the special part, but this one can tolerate.

The general chapter gives clear evidence that the authors are snake-fans. With much love they try to impress these animals closer to the layman. The chapter "Snake Encounters" especially explains how to catch snakes; this chapter obviously is addressed to the Malaysian snake-fans and, in my opinion, could have been omitted. In contrast, the chapter "Snakes and Snake-bites" is very well done and very clearly arranged. It is up to date scientifically and furnished with suitable accompanies wth colours. It covers the well-arranged paragraphs "Some Tips on the Prevention of Snakebites", "In the Field", "What to do when bitten by a Snake", "Immediate Treatment - First Aid" and "In the Hospital".

On the next two pages the reader is informed about general facts regarding snakes. Misunderstandings are cleared. This part is accented with colour and provided with quite funny cartoons. I would like to judge it as very well done.

Analyzing the specific part it becomes obvious that the taxonomy is exceptionally exact for an Asian book. The only mistakes I realized were made in the determination of Trimeresurus species. Thus, two pictures captioned T. popeorum ("T. popeorum" refers to a typing error in the species-description) in fact show T. macrops (on page 104) and most likely T. albibarb (on page 105). At least, the authors should have realized that these two photographs show two different species. The picture on page 107 does not show a juvenile T. purpureomaculatus, but a new species whose description is just being in preparation ("VOGEL in preparation"). Otherwise I must say that even the determination of the other mistaken species (T. pyrrhus and T. derbelus) is correct. Unfortunately no subspecies are mentioned in the specific part; an omission which may easily contribute to a confusion of the reader especially in species like Lycodon aliaius capucinus (page 54) and Elaphe taeniura radiata, named "Cave racer" too (page 40). I would consider the text relating to the individual species as quite informative. However, occasionally unknown facts are presented as known without mentioning any source. For example, nobody knows of what the real food of Boiga dactylius consists, but here it is indicated "Birds, eggs, and other small prey forms its usual diet". This is a deficit because, as a result, all information must be tested carefully.

In the preface 2 most critical errors, that "Thailand" means "North-Thailand" only without the Malay Peninsula, but this is indicated nowhere. For example,
Naja n. guaraica, Boida dendrophila melanota, Boiga jacupira, and some others are well known from South-Thailand.

The literature-index is unfortunately somewhat too concentrated.

However, these minor deficits should not detract from the total value of this book. In contrast, it would be advantageous if this work received broad acceptance. The text is made up very simply and is even understandable with little knowledge of the English language. It can be warmly recommended for every herpetoculturist.

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1 — Remark of the Editor: meanwhile this species was described as Trimeresurus venulcus VOGEL 1991 (SAURIA, Berlin, 13 (1): 23 - 28)

Proof not seen by author(s)