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# Bibliography of the Natural History of the Lesser Antilles with Particular Reference to the Terrestrial and Freshwater Environment (1900-2000)

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# BOOK REVIEWS

WALDMANN, G. AND M. STEVENS. 2001. Bibliography of the Natural History of the Lesser Antilles with Particular Reference to the Terrestrial and Freshwater Environment (1900-2000). Acta Biologica Benrodis. Supplement 8, 209 pp. D-42624 Solingen, Dusseldorf, Germany.

Bibliographies are such tedious things to produce but bring together so much valuable information that one would almost automatically welcome any such publication. When it deals with organisms in an area where one has studied, it is doubly welcome. Thus, both of us were particularly pleased to see a published bibliography of the natural history of the Lesser Antilles where we have had interests in the reptiles, insects, and geological history of the islands for many years. We looked forward with enthusiasm to a work that brought together, in one place, the scattered literature on all of the terrestrial and fresh water plants and animals.

Unfortunately, it must be said at the outset that this is a disappointing publication. It is particularly disappointing because so many references are omitted in the groups with which we are familiar and we must assume, therefore, that other groups are treated likewise. In addition, there are references included that have little or nothing to do with the Lesser Antilles, or where the Lesser Antilles are a minute part of a major study in another region. Also, there is an inconsistency in the arrangement of references within the major "chapter" categories and apparent arbitrariness to subsections. In fact, anyone who attempts to use this book as anything more than an introduction will find that they have overlooked much important and sometimes basic information.

Our overall impression is that this is a "hurry up" job. With all the right intentions it was begun on Monserrat in 1999 and bears a publication date of 2001 (our review copy was received in August 2001). To have attempted to bring together the literature for all the terrestrial and fresh water groups in this time period is a bit staggering in itself, yet this publication also includes geological, archaeological, economic, and historical literature. If the title had suggested that this treated some selected literature, we might have been able to compliment the authors on bringing so much information together in such a short period of time.

We do not wish to be misunderstood. There is much important information included and anyone interested in the Lesser Antilles should consult it, but they should not be led to believe that this is the source to use for all pertinent literature on any specific group of organisms or the fauna and flora of any given island.

There is time in such a review as this only to give a few specific examples of the problems encountered. The title claims that the references are from the years 1900 to 2000, but there are references that predate those years. For instance, in the reptile section Boulenger (1891) and Garman (1887) are listed. This might have been explained if there was a paucity of recent literature for this group and therefore the authors were pulling in the most recent compendium. That is not the case for reptiles. There is much recent literature, much if it cited here. Yet, in the relatively little studied insect fauna, such as the Lygaeidae, where there is little published modern work, the key papers of Uhler from the 1890s for St. Vincent and Grenada are missing (as are most of the more recent papers incidentally).

The entomological treatment lacks a number of important papers. Included among those are at least one paper that specifically mentions the Lesser Antilles in the title (Slater, J. A. and R. M. Baranowski 1979). New species of *Ozophora* from the Lesser Antilles with notes on the biology and immature states (Hemiptera: Lygaeidae). Florida Entomologist 62:244-259) as well as at least a dozen other papers by one of these authors that deals with species from the Lesser Antilles. Likewise, many of the publications of H. G. Barber, considered for many years the leading authority on the Lygaeidae, are missing. To emphasize the incomplete nature of the insect references within the order Hemiptera alone, one turns to Woodruff et al. (1988) "Checklist and bibliography of the insects of Grenada and the Grenadines. Here, 140 species are listed from Grenada alone (all in the published literature) and over 40 of these in papers published since 1900, yet there are only a few references in this publication that deal with all of the Lesser Antilles. If the treatment of the rest of the Insecta is similar to the level found in Hemiptera, it is very scanty coverage indeed.

The herpetological fauna is, of course, much better known that the insect fauna and much of the literature has already been brought together in very recent comprehensive books (e.g., Crother. 1999. Caribbean Amphibians and Reptiles. Academic Press). Yet, we inexplicably find papers missing (e.g., Censky and Linday, 1997;Censky and Hodge, 1997; Kaiser, 1995; Underwood, 1959; Williams, 1962), all of which were referenced in Crother (1999). In addition, non-herpetological references such as Malfait and Dinkleman (1972), Christman (1953), Bikenevicius et al. (1993), and McFarlane and MacPhee (1989) were referenced in Crother (1999) but missing from this publication. There was also uneven coverage of references. Frost and Etheridge (1989) treatise on Iguanidae was included but Lazell (1992) was missing. Like-

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wise, Guyer and Savage (1986) and Williams (1992) extensive papers on *Anolis* are missing as is Heyer's (1970) work on *Leptodactylus*.

Equally perplexing is the organization of this publication. For example, "Insects" can be found as a subheading under the chapter "Terrestrial Invertebrates." However, under a chapter heading "Limnology," the majority of references relate to fresh water insects yet the two subheadings are "Fresh Water Fishes" and "Tank Plants" (most of the latter refer to bromeliads and most presumably discuss the insect fauna living therein). There are also a whole host of insect references under "Medical Zoology and Public Health," a subsection of "Parasitology." Yet many mosquito references are found under "Limnology" in addition to a reference here and there in other chapters.

In the subsection "Herpetology" (itself a subsection under "Vertebrates") there is yet another subsection "Turtles." One would assume that all references to turtles would be in this subsection, yet only those references to marine turtles appear. All other turtles papers that are referenced (some are missing) are under "Herpetology." In our opinion, if subsections were needed for "Herpetology," additional ones (Lizards, Snakes and Frogs) should have been included.

And finally, the "Basic Literature" section is confusing. It includes papers and books that, while generally important, do not really deal in any detail with the Lesser Antilles or seem hardly to fall into the category of "basic" (e.g., Ober, F. A. 1880. Camps in the Caribees: The Adventure of a Naturalist in the Lesser Antilles; Heyer, et al. 1994. Measuring and Monitoring Biological Diversity: Standard Methods for Amphibians.). Yet, Darlington's (1938) classic paper on the evolution of isolated faunas of carabid beetles and the atropy of wings, a paper that led to much of the later debate concerning dispersal and vicariance, was missing from this section. Similarly, Myers (1938) paper on fresh water fishes and West Indian zoogeography did not make it out of the "Fresh Water Fish" section and into this section.

These are just a few examples to give the reader a feeling for the shortcomings of the book. If one can sum it up succinctly, this bibliography has all the appearances of being a rushed piece of work. That said, it is useful as a stepping off point for anyone looking for references outside their own speciality. We hope that this is the first attempt at such a compilation and that the next work will spend at least as much time in review by specialists as there is on compiling the references.

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