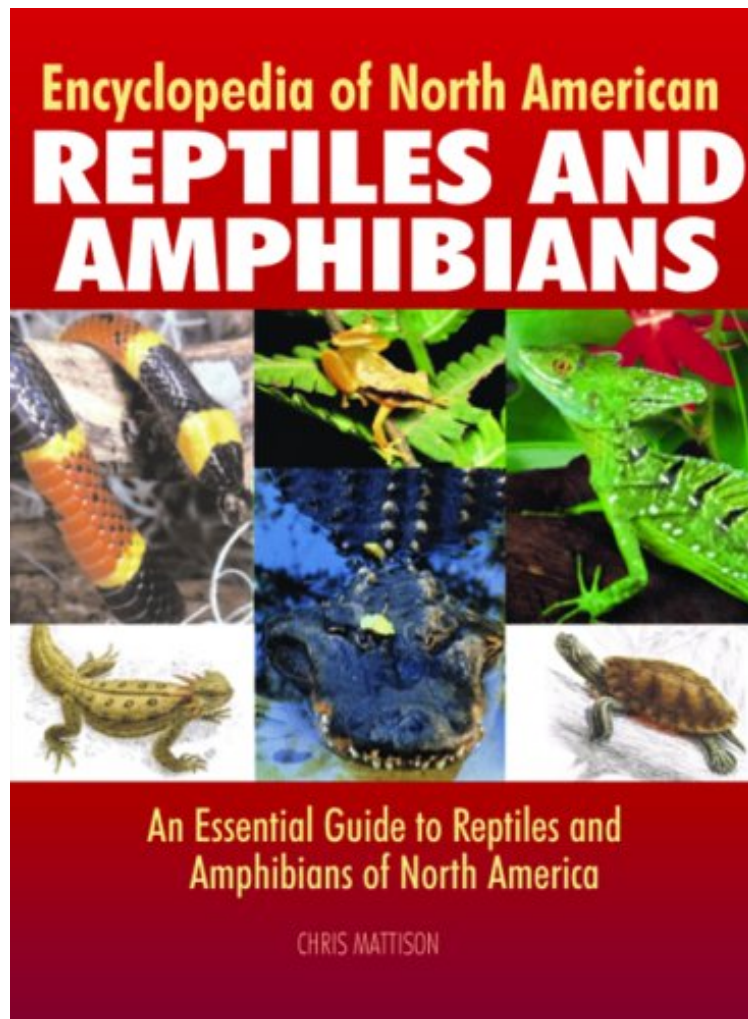


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Encyclopedia of North American Reptiles and Amphibians: An Essential Guide to Reptiles and Amphibians of North America

Chris Mattison

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Chris Mattison : Encyclopedia of North American Reptiles and Amphibians: An Essential Guide to Reptiles and Amphibians of North America before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Encyclopedia of North American Reptiles and Amphibians: An Essential Guide to Reptiles and Amphibians of North America:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy SteveAwesome1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great bookBy Draco Mal TrapnetGreat book, it really shows a lot of interesting reptiles in my own continent. I may use this book to plan future camping trips to seek out local reptiles for my photography hobby.3 of 3

people found the following review helpful. Great Pictures, Bad Information and LayoutBy SmoochyAs a self proclaimed "essential guide," one would think this book would be somewhere close to complete as far as covering all species. You'd also think that a guide to North America would stick to North America. You'd also expect that the range maps for each species would focus in on North America, be correct, and be larger than two inches. You'd also think that the photographs included would be of animals that one could find naturally in North America and not captive herptoculture hobby specimens. If you buy this book you'll get none of these things. You'll also get a load of text that is just plain wrong and at least 15 years out of date. This book only covers a few species. It seems to be focused on species that are kept in captivity that the author could photograph. There doesn't seem to be any rhyme or reason other than this. The book is filled with albino and other "morph" animals that rarely if ever appear in the wild. A guide to North America should stick to North America. In this book, North America seems to be defined as everything North of South America. The range maps are about 2 inches wide and have the silhouette of the entire world and no insert. A crudely formed red blotch is then applied to the areas where the author thinks the species occurs. Why on earth you would set up a North America book with such useless maps is beyond me. Some of the pictures in the book are great, that's what gives it two stars for me. There's a photo of a snapping turtle eating a rattlesnake - pretty cool. However, it looks as if most of them are staged, not just because of animals being in nonnative habitat, but also consuming clearly captive food. While this makes for some great shots, it isn't exactly useful. Also, pictures of captive line bred "morphs" are often included - useless for anyone interested in actually learning what is in North America. The photos of animals with natural coloration are often those from outside the scope of the book. For example, the page on Boa constrictor (apparently covered in a NA book) contains photos of an animal with the typical coloration of a boa from Honduras and well as a Boa from central South America. It is clear from the writing that the author was either too lazy or too uninformed to read the current literature on species in North America. This book was published long after there was any excuse to call anything in the New World Elaphe. The author also complains about the problems with the subspecies concept on the pages for milk snakes and "American" rat snakes, despite the rat snake problem being solved in 2001, and the ways to rectify this concept thoroughly discussed in the literature. So, steer clear and get a better book unless you don't really care or you get this for a quarter at the local five and dime. The pictures are worth it.

The Encyclopedia of North American Reptiles and Amphibians describes 82 species and groups of related reptiles and amphibians, all of which live in Central and North America, and most in the United States. Two introductory articles describe the basic body structure, biology, and natural history of amphibians and reptiles. Descriptions of individual species vary: from the Barton Springs salamander that lives in just four springs in Texas to the common garter snake that lives from coast to coast; from the green, leatherback, and hawksbill turtles that frequent all shores to the western diamondback rattlesnake of the driest landscapes; and from the poisonous Gila monster of Southwestern deserts to the monstrous alligator snapping turtle of the Mississippi swamps. These and other examples demonstrate the vast diversity of one of the most intriguing group of animals.