

cited references provide little information and I have had to depend upon primary sources. Thus, much information in this book is published for the first time. References abbreviated to author and date are given in full in the Literature Cited section (pages 134-135) or in that person's biography.

*Dates.*—Virtually all dates given in these biographies are reckoned according to the modern calendar now in general use throughout the world. This calendar—the Gregorian calendar, or sometimes termed the reformed Julian calendar—first came into use in 1582, but was not then adopted universally. By that time, the accumulated discrepancy between the old Julian and Gregorian calendars was ten days; thus, ten days of 1582 were omitted to bring the calendar into correspondence again. However, Great Britain and her colonies did not adopt the new calendar until 1752, and the Soviet Union and some neighboring countries did not do so until 1918, by which times the discrepancies were 11 and 12 days, respectively. Sweden, on the other hand, switched over gradually during the period 1696 to 1753. For events in these countries before these dates, therefore, it is common in the literature to see double dates (for example, the date "1/13 April 1839" in Russia, with the second being that according to the modern calendar).

In this book, I have given dates in their original form. Effectively, this means that most dates are in modern Gregorian format, except for the countries listed above that switched at various times after 1582. However, in the biographical information available to me, it was not always clear whether the old or modern form was used and in some cases I have not been able to determine the correct situation. Thus, readers must use such dates for these countries with caution if they occur before the calendar was changed to the Gregorian format.

*Literature Cited.*—I provide a brief list of literature, beginning on page 134, which is intended as an introduction to the historical literature of herpetology. A number of the references are ostensibly to other disciplines, but include persons who also published on amphibians and reptiles.

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*Corrections and Missing Information.*—I am cognizant of the possibility that some information presented here is incorrect, although every effort has been made to insure accuracy. Since further editions or volumes of this book might be undertaken, I earnestly solicit comments and corrections, with supporting documentation wherever possible. Although I was successful in obtaining signatures for all biographees, I did not obtain three portraits (those for Laurenti, Daudin, and Bourret), despite extensive efforts. These portraits thus represent prime desiderata.

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