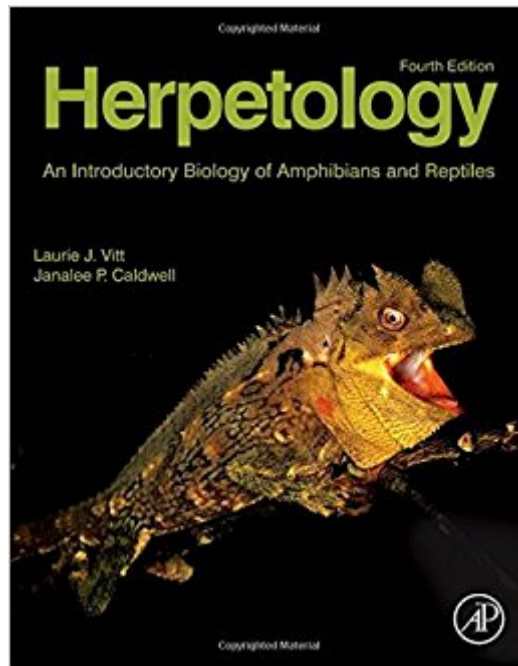


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Herpetology, Fourth Edition: An Introductory Biology Of Amphibians And Reptiles



Synopsis

The fourth edition of the textbook *Herpetology* covers the basic biology of amphibians and reptiles, with updates in nearly every conceptual area. Not only does it serve as a solid foundation for modern herpetology courses, but it is also relevant to courses in ecology, behavior, evolution, systematics, and morphology. Examples taken from amphibians and reptiles throughout the world make this book a useful herpetology textbook in several countries. Naturalists, amateur herpetologists, herpetoculturists, zoo professionals, and many others will find this book readable and full of relevant natural history and distributional information. Amphibians and reptiles have assumed a central role in research because of the diversity of ecological, physiological, morphological, behavioral, and evolutionary patterns they exhibit. This fully revised edition brings the latest research to the reader, ranging over topics in evolution, reproduction, behavior and more, allowing students and professionals to keep current with a quickly moving field. Heavily revised and updated with discussion of squamate (lizard and snake) taxonomy and new content reflected in current literature. Includes increased focus on conservation biology in herpetology while retaining solid content on organismal biology of reptiles and amphibians. Presents new photos included from authors' extensive library.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This textbook is based on Zug's seminal *Herpetology*, but unfortunately after he stopped working on it, the book was reorganized. Originally, amphibians were covered and then reptiles. When they are

combined together, it forces the reader to jump back and forth between topics and pay close attention to the short notes that "this does not happen in reptiles" or "unlike amphibians..." If you miss those cues, it's easy to lose track of which group has what. I know that amphibians and reptiles are covered together because they have historically been lumped together, but amphibians are vastly different from reptiles and the reptiles are vastly different from each other (and paraphyletic!). It would be much easier to understand if each group was covered in turn. The book swings from readable to barely comprehensible depending upon the section. It is particularly poor about introducing terminology before using it. For instance, in the "Classification and Diversity" section, the description for one family reads: "Pareatids have a blunt snout, lack a mental groove, and have no teeth on the anterior part of the maxillary." That's great, if the authors had ever mentioned what a mental groove is or why it matters. FYI, it's a groove on the underside of a snake's chin formed by an infolded pleat of skin, allowing the snake to expand its mouth wider when enveloping prey. So lack of a mental groove could give you an indication of a snake's diet, if the authors had explained that. This is just a small example, but it happens frequently throughout the book, especially in the phylogenetics, anatomy and physiology sections. In the end, this is the only Herpetology textbook still in print so it is "assigned" reading in my herpetology course.

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