

THE SNAKES OF MALAYA. Tweedie, M. W. F. 1983. Third Edition, Singapore National Printers (Pte) Ltd., 303 Upper Serangoon Road, Singapore 1334, 167pp.

Snakes have always fascinated man since the earliest times and have been portrayed significantly in folklore and superstition throughout the world. While numerous scientific accounts of snakes exist, there remains until more recently, very few books written for the public that will enable them to recognise the different snake species. Tweedie's book however serves both, the scientific community and the public. It has withstood the test of time, this third edition being published 24 years after the second edition (in 1957), which is itself considerably revised over the first edition. It remains to this date, the classic reference text for snakes of the region.

The material in this third edition has been reorganised and substantially revised and updated with the latest information. Taxonomic changes have been incorporated and revisions are made to the species descriptions as well as to the useful identification keys, some of which have been totally rewritten. The book also carries an entire chapter on "Snakebite" contributed by the late H. A. Reid whose extensive experience is shared with the readers. Missing from the introduction of the third edition but which appeared in the second edition are sections on "collecting and preserving snakes" and "snakes in captivity", as well as the synopsis of the families. The inclusion of new information is evident such as the discussion on the diet of the slug snakes (*Pareas*) in the introductory section on "food". The chapter on "Identification of Malayan snakes" remains fairly the same except for the taxonomic updating. The identification key has only minor changes which demonstrates Tweedie's keen powers of observation when he first constructed it. The chapter on "Systematic list" in the second edition is also excluded from this edition.

Almost 140 species of snakes belonging to nine families from Malaysia and Singapore are discussed. The descriptions are simple enough even for the educated layman. The black-and-white photographs of the snakes are indeed useful, although one cannot help noticing that four black-and-white plates (red-tailed pipe snake, striped racer, painted mock viper and banded Malayan coral snake) and the only colour plate of the yellow-ringed cat snake, seen in the second edition are not included with the third edition. The book remains as an important source of reference on the venomous and non-venomous snakes of the region, particularly Peninsular Malaysia and Singapore.

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LABYRINTHFISCHE FARBE IM AQUARIUM. Ein Handbuch für Bestimmung Pflege und Zucht. 1990. Horst Linke. ISBN 3-89356-110-2. Tetra-Verlag, Tetra Werke Dr. rer. nat. Ulrich Baensch GmbH, 4520 Melle 1, Postfach 1580, Germany. 174 pp.

The popularity of the anabantoid fishes as aquarium pets has resulted in the release of many books on the subject, almost all by aquarists. The most recent such release by Horst Linke, in effect a revision and update of his 1980 book, dealing with the world Anabantidae, Belontiidae, Helostomatidae and Osphronemidae is certainly one of the better ones. Although the text is entirely in German, it will nevertheless prove useful for scientists and amateurs in this part of the world.