

2001), a manuscript on the biological species concept (Minton, 2003), and the final draft of the second edition of his well-known and highly regarded *Amphibians and Reptiles of Indiana*. When the first edition of *Amphibians and Reptiles of Indiana* was published in 1972, its light blue cardboard cover (which, if it stayed dry and therefore stayed on, quickly faded to white) and black-and-white presentation made it resemble a government flight manual (perhaps something on Madge's bookshelf; see Stewart, 2000). But, as was almost always the case with Sherman, looks were deceiving. This book was crafted and wise. Sherman built it based on half a lifetime's field experience and his meticulously recorded field notes. Following an introduction and historical review, Sherman presented sections on the topography and climate of Indiana, distribution and derivation of Indiana's herpetofauna, amphibian and reptile species accounts, species extirpations, questionable occurrences, exotics, and literature cited. Drawings (by his brother, John) were included to ensure correct identification. Each species account typically described the animals' morphology, habitat, and habits and included photos and a dot map showing known Indiana occurrences, separated into vouchered specimens and literature records. It cost \$6.00 (a deal, but I got a better one; upon arriving in Indiana, Jim List, who also shared and understood Sherman's world, gave me his second copy as a gift).

As with Phil Smith's (1961) book on Illinois amphibians and reptiles, published a decade earlier, and Dick Vogt's (1981) Wisconsin book published a decade later, *Amphibians and Reptiles of Indiana* was an instant classic among herpetologists. Each of these Midwestern works bore the personality and experience of their creators—relying primarily on personal experiences and in many cases unpublished data, with literature accounts playing either a supporting or contrasting role. In light of more recent reports on amphibian and reptile declines, this trilogy along with two earlier works (Breckenridge, 1944 for Minnesota, and Walker, 1946 for Ohio) and one later work (Pfungsten and Downs, 1989 for Ohio) forms much of the historical basis for our understanding of the Midwestern herpetofauna—the background against which current conservation status can be measured.

The second edition of *Amphibians and Reptiles of Indiana* retains the best features of the first, including its basic layout, much of the original text, drawings, and dot maps—updated to reflect new data. Each species account is augmented with a national distribution map and high quality color photos replace the old black-

AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES OF INDIANA. Sherman A. Minton Jr. 2001. 2d ed. Indiana Academy of Science, Indianapolis, Indiana. Available from Bill N. McNight, Park Tudor School, 7200 North College Avenue, Indianapolis, Indiana 46240. ISBN 1-883362-10-5. 404 p. \$38.00 (hardcover).—These days, when professional success so often stems from image and brings with it attitude and career leverage, it is comforting to know that not so long ago you could be good simply because you were good, that people would know this without you telling them, and the knowledge of a job well done was a reward unto itself. This was the world of Sherman Minton Jr., and remains the world of those who admired him.

Sherman died on 15 June 1999, at age 80, and left behind some unpublished work: his autobiography *Life, Love, and Reptiles* (Minton,

and-white ones. The second edition is hard cover, solid brown, and textured in a lizard-like scale pattern (somehow not the sort of idea one sees originating from Sherman). The dust cover is spectacular (keep it on), showing a pair of Cope's gray treefrogs on a red elm tree.

Although the first edition of *Amphibians and Reptiles of Indiana* appealed to believers, the second edition (whether Sherman's intention or not) seeks to convert, as the quality of the presentation finally matches the level of Sherman's knowledge and the skill of his writing style. Unlike the first edition, the second edition makes an extraordinarily attractive package. Buy copies and give them as gifts to friends; or better yet, give them to friend's kids. The 30 years of comparisons represented here make a stronger argument for science-based amphibian and reptile conservation than many publications devoted to the subject.

The tragedy of the second edition is that, although Sherman submitted the manuscript in 1995, he did not live to see it published. It is beside the point that those of us who now use this book know it was worth the wait. The four years Sherman had left to live (although, of course we didn't know it then) was sufficient time to publish this work. And although there is an explanation for the publication delay included in the Forward, we in Indiana who were closest to this work feel that this sad situation could have been prevented—that not everything that could have been done to facilitate publication was done. Without Sherman, Daryl Karns especially, but also several other Hoosier herpetologists deserve much credit for seeing this book to completion. It will be a long time before I forget the image at the 2001 SSAR/HL meetings of this hometown crowd huddled while pouring over proofs, checking the text for typos and debating the quality and identity of the photos.

Sherman's life and his marriage/partnership with Madge are well known—now part of North American herpetology's folklore (Stewart, 2000; Minton, 2001). And Sherman has been eulogized both in public (Bechtel, 1999; Karns, 2001) and in private (D. Karns and M. Lodato, 2000 and 2001 meetings respectively, Indiana Department of Natural Resources Amphibian and Reptile Technical Advisory Committee, Butler University, Indianapolis, IN). However, because Sherman did not draw attention to himself (see also Bechtel, 1999) there is something that Sherman never dwelled on, so is either not mentioned in these tributes or is only mentioned in passing—how close Sherman's career,

and therefore any edition of *Amphibians and Reptiles of Indiana* came to not happening.

Sherman and I shared an academic institution, but we also shared something else. In the back flap to the second edition of *Amphibians and Reptiles of Indiana*, we read "Sherman served in World War II as a medical officer on a converted WW I destroyer outfitted to carry frog men [how appropriate] and underwater demolition teams in the South Pacific." Meg Stewart (2000) also mentions Sherman's wartime experience and the fact that his ship (the U.S.S. BROOKS) was hit by a kamikaze. This story starts for me with Dick Bovbjerg's (1994) description of his wartime experiences as a skipper of the U.S. Navy minesweeper YMS 353: "The kamikazes came down from the clouds. The [ship's] log noted that two bombers hit two destroyers near us. They came at us just off the water. We were headed into [Lingayen Gulf] to sweep. They came at us from the starboard side. Coming out of the bay were two destroyer minesweepers, one on each side of us. They had made a fast run in and out, clearing a channel for the rest of us to widen. And this was when the two planes, the medium bombers, came at us, when we had a destroyer exactly on each side. The starboard tin can got hit on the bridge; the first one, on our right. Huge explosion, fire, men running to the focsle fleeing the flames. Carnage. The second plane flew up and over that burning can and headed for us. Right for me! My eyes were glued; and I knew that in seconds I would be dead. The plane loomed huge. As it roared the two-three hundred yards from the exploding tin can which now struggled past us, our twenty millimeter tracers plowed into the plane. Too late. . . . But it pulled up. It climbed up and over us. The pilot had seen the other destroyer on our port side. It just cleared our mast and socked into the engine room of the other can. Two hits out of two destroyers. They were on fire, and in sinking condition".

Knowing that Sherman was in the South Pacific during WW II, I sent him Dick's book figuring he would find it interesting. Within a week Sherman wrote back: "Most of the places he mentions are ones I know, and his accounts of shipboard life are right on the money. During the war, our paths must have crossed numerous times. I know they did at Lake Sentani [New Guinea] where I saw my first monitor lizard and at Lingayen. I was on one of the ships he saw hit and burning."

In his autobiography, Sherman writes: ". . . we left for Lingayen Gulf near the northern end of Luzon. This time we were part of a mine-

sweeping operation. About noon on January 6, we were in the gulf, it was fairly quiet, and I was on deck. Then, over the coastal hills, came two dark green Jap Zeros. One streaked for the destroyer-minesweeper [U.S.S.] LONG and hit her amidships sending up a great ball of smoke and flame; the other headed for us. I went down the compartment where our little sick bay was. There was a loud clatter of bullets hitting the decks, a violent shock, and a great gust of hot air. Those of us in the compartment started up the ladder, but there was only fire at the top. We opened an emergency hatch and crawled out onto the main deck. The midships section was in flames, and a bomb had blown a great hole in the deck. This is where training and discipline pay off, because you're too scared and shaken to do any thinking."

Over 50 years later, these events seem as otherworldly as the grainy black and white film that will forever record them. But for these two guys, who never met, this one shared experience was profound. Sherman named his first daughter Brooks, Dick punctuated his classroom discussions with war stories.

History is nothing if not an unending string of contingencies. After the war, Dick Bovbjerg got his Ph.D. at the University of Chicago and became an aquatic ecologist at The University of Iowa, published an early paper on amphibian declines (Bovbjerg, 1965), and for 30 years was the Director of the Iowa Lakeside Laboratory; he was my first mentor. Sherman went on to publish over 170 scientific articles and books. The first snake my son Peter held (at age 4) was Sherman's. Had that Japanese pilot made a different decision and hit Dick's ship, or had he still chosen to hit Sherman's ship, but in a different place, the history of midwestern herpetology would have played out differently than it has. And in one of these scenarios neither the first nor the second editions of *Amphibians and Reptiles of Indiana* would have been published.

The lessons of the second edition of *Amphibians and Reptiles of Indiana* are several and most reside within its covers. But to my mind there is a more fundamental, perhaps seemingly superficial, lesson. Although it is a cliché to lament unrealized potential—what could have been and was not, *Amphibians and Reptiles of Indiana* is about something so much rarer—what could have been and was. In fact *Amphibians and Reptiles of Indiana* is the only one of the Midwestern amphibian and reptile books published in the last 50 years to realize a second edition. And so we must celebrate this work as fulfilled promise. Sherman Minton cherished Indiana's amphibians and reptiles. This second edition not only

brings them alive, but, if we use it wisely, its attractive presentation and overall appeal may provide the leverage needed to keep them alive.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I thank A. Resetar, K. Lang, and S. Johnson Lannoo for critiquing an earlier draft of this manuscript.

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