

Book Review

The Biology of the Coccidia (Apicomplexa) of Snakes of the World: A Scholarly Handbook for Identification and Treatment, Donald W. Duszynski and Steve J. Upton, 430 pages, Illustrated. CreateSpace Inc., a DBA of On-Demand publishing LLC, an Amazon.com Company, Price \$70.00 USD (<https://createspace.com/3388533>). ISBN: 1448617995.

Few groups of animals possess such a diversified and complex assemblage of coccidian protists as do snakes. In their recent work, Don Duszynski and Steve Upton summarize some of the results of the enormous effort they put into their creation of Coccidia of the World internet database in the past decade.

Their new book covers some 350 pages of the text and figures, followed by numerous tables, an extensive list of references and a useful index. The first two chapters of the book include an introduction and a very brief overview into the systematics and life cycles of coccidia, with major aspects of the life cycles depicted on several schemes. Chapter three summarizes the methodological approaches for the study of coccidia with some minor excursion into the theory of taxonomy. Unfortunately, this section focuses mostly on exogenous stages and their detection and morphology, generally omitting the importance of endogenous development for the classification of reptilian coccidia. Also the necessity and methodology of experimental work with heteroxenous genera (esp. *Sarcocystis*) would be worth mentioning in such a complex account.

Following chapters (4–8) are devoted to the enormously extensive and detailed checklist of described species of coccidia belonging to the Eimeriidae. Individual species' accounts are well structured and summarize all the data necessary for taxonomic work, including hundreds of drawings from original descriptive papers. In a similar way, chapter nine summarizes all the species of heteroxenous *Sarcocystis* known from

snakes, including several descriptions of new taxa. In my opinion, these extensive and critically compiled checklists represent the major asset of the book. Until now, these data were hopelessly scattered in hundreds of original descriptions, quite often in old and/or obscure journals and books. The data on *Cryptosporidium* and *Toxoplasma* in reptiles in chapters ten and eleven, respectively, is a valuable addition. However, the major targets of the book are the above mentioned two families, Eimeriidae and Sarcocystidae.

Lastly, Chapter 12 (16 pp.) deals with veterinary aspects of coccidia and coccidiosis in snakes, including a basic review of the control and prophylactic strategies. Although this part of the book is not an extensive clinical reference, introduction to the mechanisms of coccidiosis in snakes, together with a list of available therapies and references to original studies will be highly appreciated by any clinician interested in this topic.

I recommend this book without hesitation. It is written by two renowned researchers, who not only devoted their lives to the research on coccidia, but who are always enthusiastic in sharing their knowledge. Definitely, this volume is an absolute must for any current or future taxonomist, who wants to cope with the vast diversity of reptilian coccidia. Having one handsome green book on the shelf, instead of hundreds and hundreds of copied articles in various stages of decomposition, is something I have been dreaming about for the past decade.

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