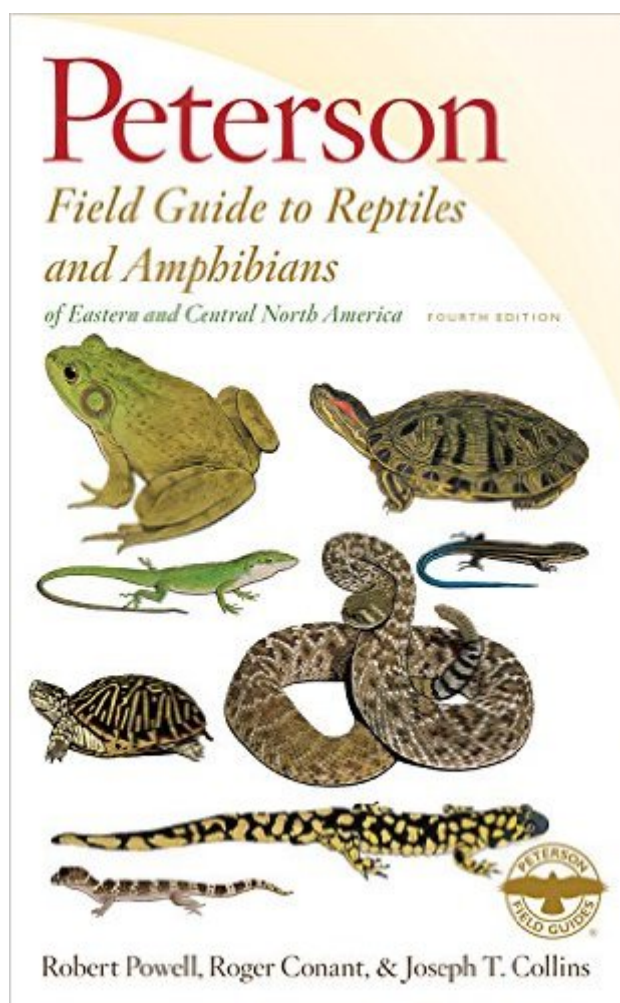


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Peterson Field Guide To Reptiles And Amphibians Of Eastern And Central North America, Fourth Edition (Peterson Field Guides)



Synopsis

A completely updated edition, including 122 newly recognized or recently established non-native species of reptiles and amphibians. The new edition of this definitive guide reflects 25 years' worth of changes in our knowledge of reptiles and amphibians. It includes descriptions of 122 newly recognized or recently established non-native species, updated maps, and new figures and photos. Color illustrations and drawings show key details for accurate identification. More than 100 color photographs and 322 color distribution maps accompany the species descriptions. Clear and concise species accounts provide key characteristics, similar species, habitats, and ranges, as well as subspecies, voice descriptions, and conservation status. This edition will be a crucial resource for professional and amateur herpetologists, naturalists, outdoor enthusiasts, and students.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This guide has been one of my favorite herp books for many decades. The previous edition, first published in 1991, included a few recently discovered native species (for example, the Pigeon Mountain salamander) and various established exotics (mainly lizards) not yet known when the 1975 edition was published, and also introduced clearer, more colorful and detailed range maps included with each species account rather than placing them in a section at the back. This latest edition includes all that but also incorporates many recent taxonomic changes, even more detailed range maps, and adds many more newly discovered native species (many of them cryptic

look-alikes) as well as many more established non-native species that have been recently recorded, in large part from Florida. I was very excited to see this long awaited 4th edition and the impressive wealth of new information it contains, and so considering this as well as the way I feel about this book in general, I am giving it 4 stars, though I had really hoped to make it 5. One major disappointment for me is that, apparently to reduce the number of pages, many of the old species accounts have been condensed, and some material from the previous edition, like the chapters on field herping, care in captivity, etc., has been omitted. Also, the classic illustrations on the color plates have been reduced in scale for some reason, apparently in order to accommodate the new color tabs along the margins without increasing the number of plates. I am rather puzzled by some of the tinkering that has taken place in this regard, and think some errors were made. For example, on Plate 6, the Yonahlossee salamander, which is the largest of the woodland salamander group, now looks only about the same size as its cousins like the slimy and red-cheeked.

I couldn't wait to get my hands on this after talking to one of the books principal reviewers; I'm quite disappointed. It provides an update with regard to taxonomy, newly described species, and exotics and includes some new photos - that is the extent of the improvement. It uses the same color plates as 3rd ed., which is fine because they were good, but they all have been reduced somewhat in size to accommodate an unnecessarily wide color-coded border. Within the first few pages I found a couple of errors - incorrect Figure numbers (see page salamander, southern dusky salamander). Also, and an issue in the 3rd edition, Figures referenced in the species accounts are often many pages remote from the text; it would be helpful in such instances to provide a page number to make it easier to find the figure (e.g., for Carolina Mountain Dusky Salamander, the species account is on p. 43 and Fig. 3 is on p.18). Maps are not considered figures and some of the figures are imbedded opposite the plates, so the search can be annoying. Despite the addition of many new species, this book is 120 pages shorter than the 3rd, and what's lost is unfortunate. The introductory pages on some herping techniques are gone. As others have mentioned, the species accounts have been stripped down to the minimum (compare the species accounts of two-toed amphiuma in the 3rd and 4th; at least mention that they can bite!). I thought the treatment of rat snakes and kingsnakes deserved more coverage, given their variability. The range map of gray rat snake shows it west of the Apalachicola River, with some color variant of the eastern rat snake to the east. I have encountered many rat snakes that appear to have been grays in and around St.

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