Hylid Frogs of Middle America

Short Description
A complete, comprehensive account of all 165 hylid frog species from Middle America, in two volumes.

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Hylid Frogs of Middle America originally surveyed all 115 species of hylid frogs then known from Mexico to Panama, complemented by reproductions of David M. Dennis's highly detailed and life-like watercolors. Hobart M. Smith commented in Copeia, "Hylid Frogs marks an apogee of achievement; it is the Hope Diamond of technical herpetological literature." The book was an instant success, but it soon went out of print and copies today fetch $300 or more on the secondhand market, when they can be found at all.

During the intervening years until the present, the number of species in this region has risen by 50 to 165, most of them new species from southern Mexico, Guatemala, and Honduras, and all of them from the highland regions. The expanded edition consists of 1170 pages, a 55% enlargement of the original, and 20 new plates. The new edition includes a reprint of the original text plus a supplement in which each species account is revised and the new or resurrected species are treated in detail. Similarly, the numbers of figures, tables, and appendices are significantly increased. New spot distribution maps are provided for the new species and also for many others whose distributions have expanded since 1970.
For reproduction of the color plates, the original watercolors have been laser scanned not photographically reproduced as in 1970 using the latest technologies. This has produced images that are brighter, more accurate, and much closer to the original paintings. In addition, Mr. Dennis has produced 55 new watercolours (51 in colour, 4 black-and-white). The resulting plates are of the highest standard.

The species accounts are arranged as in the 1970 edition: Synonymy, Diagnosis, Description, Tadpoles, Mating Call, Natural History, Remarks, Etymology, and Distribution. There is a review of the evolutionary history of Middle America including plate tectonics, the evolution and phylogenetic relationships of hylid frogs, a chapter on distribution and diversity, and biogeographic comparisons between hylids and frogs of the genus Eleutherodactylus and with bolitoglossine salamanders, the two other large taxonomic and geographic segments of the Middle American amphibian fauna.

There is also a chapter on conservation, keys to adults, and a table of larval characteristics. Results of phylogenetic analyses are provided for most hypothesized lineages. As in the original edition, there are extensive tables showing the distribution of species within ecogeographic regions; altitudinal distribution, habitat, and reproductive sites; and an appendix listing all newly acquired museum specimens.