



Book reviews

Brown, B. E.: Atlas of New World Marsupials. Fieldiana Zoology NS 102. Chicago, Ill.: Field Museum of Natural History 2004. 308pp., 98 figs. ISBN 0015-0754.

A large number of marsupial species have been described in the past with a wide distribution in the New World. Here, species diversity is especially rich in Central and South America. However, species records and original descriptions are very scattered in the literature and in some cases the species status is uncertain and consequently has been diversely treated in several summarizing annotations. The aim of the publication at hand, therefore, is to give a detailed overview of the taxonomic history of recorded species including synonyms and data on locality and distribution. Barbara E. Brown started this time-consuming work already in 1992 under the supervision of Philip Hershkowitz. She took into consideration all relevant literature up to the end of 2001 and additionally also some documented but unpublished records of several scientists. In this way, she has altogether collected data on Neotropical marsupials represented in 3 orders and at least 20 genera and 83 species. The Didelphimorpha with the family Didelphidae is by

far the largest group which alone includes 16 genera and 76 species. The only family Caenolestidae of the order Paucituberculata hosts 3 genera in 6 species and the Microbiotheria the single species *Dromiciops gliroides* of the Microbiotheridae. Species and genera are characterized with holotypes, locations and synonyms and maps show their distribution in Central and South America. In several cases, the published records are completed by unpublished data. The list of references is very comprehensive as is an attached gazetteer on locality names, geographical coordinates and elevations as far as documented. For some genera, different species are recorded from rather near-by regions which certainly makes the species status doubtful but at the same time documents further need of taxonomic revisions and clarifications. Consequently, this work certainly is a valuable reference on the momentary state of knowledge which is very useful for a general overview of information and future in-depth investigations.

doi:10.1016/j.mambio.2004.11.013

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Kays, R. W.; Wilson, D. E.: Mammals of North America. Princeton, Oxford: Princeton University Press 2002. 240pp., 108 colour plates. \$19.95, £ 12.95. ISBN: 0-691-08890-X.

Two eminent US mammalogists have published a field guide — “part science and part art” — which gives an account of the mammals living in North America and in

the oceans around it. Visitors to Canada, the United States and northern Mexico with mammological interests are supplied with 108 colour plates of 442 species. The paperback represents a convenient companion for those who want to obtain an overview of the diverse North American mammalian fauna. For all mammals native to this continent the vernacular and scientific names are