



Book Review

All the mammals of the world

By Lynx Nature Books
2023, Toni Llobet (main artist)
Lynx Nature Books, Barcelona
pp. 800,
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The recommended citation of this book gives Lynx Nature Books as the author. This is because it is compiled by the team at Lynx and Mammals of the World. Within that name a very large number of competent people can be imagined. A list of authors and artists is given after the contents. The Foreword was written by Professor Ara Monadjem who works in the Department of Biological Sciences at the University of Eswatini, Eswatini. He is a fellow of the Mammal Research Institute in the Department of Zoology and Entomology at the University of Pretoria, South Africa. The Introduction was written by Mr Connor Burgin who is a PhD Candidate at the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico. He was one of the editors of the two volume *Illustrated Checklist of the Mammals of the World*, published by Lynx.

This volume presents all the world's mammals in a single illustrated volume. Its stated aim is to bring the extraordinary richness and diversity of the world's mammals closer to a wider and more general audience. Transferring knowledge from academic spheres to a general public, with conservation in mind—this stated as a major goal of the book. The vast bulk of the volume consists of species drawings and maps, which are somewhat asymmetrically scattered over the pages, in sections delineated by irregular grey lines. Taxonomic information is given with each animal in and between these species 'boxes'. Taxonomic arrangement follows the Version 1.9, of the Mammal Diversity Database (mammaldiversity.org) released on April 1, 2022, which is run by the American Society of Mammalogists. Overall the book contains: a preface, an introduction, illustrations of all the mammals, an index and appendices. The illustrations take up 663 of the book's 800 pages. Overall there are 7349 illustrations covering all species as well as sexual dimorphism, morphs and some distinctive

subspecies. In addition, there are 6459 distribution maps with written summaries and notes on altitudinal ranges. The six appendices cover extinct and domestic species, taxonomic and systematic controversies (by Connor Burgin), country codes, reference maps and single-country endemics. There are only three short pages of references in this book: one associated with the Introduction and two with the appendix on taxonomic and systematic controversies.

The audience addressed is a general one with the online promotional material stating, 'We hope that this new book will reach a large number of people, sparking and growing their interest in mammals and wildlife...' ([Lynx Nature Books 2023](#)).

The most obvious strength of his book is that it presents all the world's mammals, with illustrations, in the one volume. The next most obvious is that its information is taken from the global project *Handbook of the Mammals of the World* series ([Wilson et al. 2009–2019](#)) and the *Illustrated Checklist of the Mammals of the World* ([Burgin et al. 2020](#)). The weakness perhaps only for academics will be the lack of reference material, although this will not hamper the wide general-public audience who will use it.

The book undoubtedly aids the discipline of mammalogy by making the world's mammals and information about the location, status, morphology and relationships easily accessible and transferable to a general audience to promote their conservation, which was a key intent of the book. Its presence in libraries would only extend that role. Beyond this general educational benefit it will act as a starter or quick reference for academic labs. The organisation of the text, described above, is standard for this type of book and for field guides, which makes it easy to assess particularly with the help of the index. The writing style is pitched at the target general audience and

is clear, interesting, detailed (enough) and appropriate. There is some useful supplementary material including an atlas that has been linked to the appendix with country codes and also includes important mountain ranges, rivers and other geographic features important to understanding the distribution of the mammals. There is an appendix with maps on the extinct species, of which I note Australia plays too large a role.

I would recommend this book to good libraries and general readers so that they may be enlightened by the diversity within its pages and in the hope of a stated intent of the authors, that, it may aid in the conservation of the mammals within its pages. I imagine children in particular might be keen to wrestle with it and immerse themselves with the fantastic diversity of this Class of animals.

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Conflicts of interest. The authors declare no conflicts of interest.