

This book, first published in 1987 and here reprinted with a new foreword by the authors has become a classic in the field of herpetology. In ecological and evolutionary research snakes occupy a unique niche. Studies of their adaptations and life histories have broad applications for the most basic questions in biology. This book fills the need for an up-to-date text/reference in the growing field of snake ecology and evolutionary biology. Here, in one volume is an extensive review of the biology of these fascinating reptiles, including topics such as zoogeography, fossil history, systematics, foraging and reproduction. With contributions from many leading herpetologists, the work is divided into sections on Systematics and Morphology, Methods and Techniques and Life History and Ecology. Each section summarizes what is known about these major fields of snake biology. This book serves the needs of those actively involved in research as well as the amateur naturalist and the beginning student. Dr. Richard A. Seigel became interested in herpetology while an undergraduate at Rutgers University, where he received his B.A. in Zoology and Physiology in 1977. He continued his work with amphibians and reptiles while getting his M.S. in Biological Sciences from the University of Central Florida in 1979 and his Ph.D. from the University of Kansas in 1984. He is currently Full Professor and Chair of the Department of Biological Sciences at Towson University in Maryland. Dr. Siegels primary research interests are in the population ecology and conservation biology of amphibians and reptiles. He has published over 50 peer-reviewed papers and has co-authored or edited four texts on the ecology and biology of snakes. From 1993-2000, he was the Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Herpetology, the largest international publication in its field. Joseph T. Collins has written more than 200 articles on reptiles, amphibians, and fishes throughout North America and twenty-three books, including: Peterson Field Guide to Reptiles and Amphibians of Eastern and Central North America Third Edition (with Roger Conant), Amphibians and Reptiles in Kansas Third Edition (with photographs by Suzanne L. Collins), Natural Kansas, An Illustrated Guide to Endangered or Threatened Species in Kansas, (with Suzanne L. Collins, Jerry Horak, Dan Mulhern, William H. Busby, Craig C. Freeman, and Gary Wallace), A Key to Amphibians and Reptiles of the Continental United States and Canada (with Robert Powell and Errol D. Hooper, Jr.). In 1978, Collins served as president of the Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles, the leading international professional society in that field, as president of the Kansas Association of Biology Teachers (1980-1981) and as president of the Kansas Herpetological Society. He was a distinguished delegate to the First World Congress of Herpetology at Canterbury, England in 1989, and was made a Distinguished Life Member of the Kansas Herpetological Society in 1998. Susan S. Novak, a native of Chicago, has been a Lawrence, Kansas, resident since 1986. Novak has been an editor of scientific/technical, scholarly, and popular work for twenty years, working formerly as the editor at the Savannah River Ecology Laboratory. She joined the staff of the Kansas State Historical Society in 1993, where she has since served as the managing editor of Kansas Heritage magazine and the associate editor of Kansas History: A Journal of the Central Plains, providing regular departments, main articles, photographs, book reviews, and layout and design work.

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