

BOOK REVIEW

Semiaquatic Mammals

Semiaquatische Säugetiere. Materialien des 2. Internationalen Symposiums "Semiaquatische Säugetiere" in Osnabrück vom 9.6 bis 12.6.1992. R. Schröpfer, M. Stubbe and D. Heidecke, eds. Wissenschaftliche Beiträge, Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg, Halle/Saale, 1992, 468 pp. ISBN 3-86010-362-8.

This book is the next issue of series entitled "Kongreß- und Tagungsberichte der Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg" published by the Institute of Zoology of this university. It constitutes the proceedings of the 2nd Symposium of Semiaquatic Mammals (2nd SSM), which took place in Osnabrück (northwestern Germany) in June 9 – 12, 1992. It contains 42 papers presented at the meeting, as well as editors' foreword, protocols of 2 workshops (one on European mink and another on European beaver), obituary of Leonid S. Lavrov – Russian beaver-specialist, and lists of symposium participants and sponsors.

The published papers, were mostly presented as lectures during 2nd SSM, but some posters are also included. The authors of works come from 11 European countries: Germany (20 papers), Russia (6), Spain (4), Slovak Republic (3), Belarus and Latvia (each 2), Austria, Denmark, Iceland, the Netherlands, and Poland (each 1). The majority of papers is published in German with English summary (23) or in English (12), and only 9 are solely in German. They present studies carried out on 15 semiaquatic mammal species. Papers on beaver (13), otter (9), and 2 species of minks (7) prevail. On the other hand, single papers concern animals as rare as Russian desman *Desmana moschata* and Tibetan water shrew *Nectogale elegans*. The other objects of presented researches are 2 *Neomys* species, 2 *Arvicola* species, nutria, muskrat, and Norway rat. Papers about ecology, protection, and reintroduction of species mentioned above predominate, but several studies are focused on ethology, biology, morphology and diseases/parasites. Five papers concerns more general problems (see below).

The advantage of this publication is that reports of quite many investigations of European semiaquatic mammals are collected in one volume. Moreover, the majority of papers contains references of other related publications what constitutes an additional source of information. Unquestionable good point of these proceedings is quite numerous papers written by East European authors, which until now were usually published in their native languages. The presence of some review-papers can be interested also for mammalogists not working with semiaquatic mammals (e.g. Schröpfer R. and Stubbe M. "The diversity of European semiaquatic mammals within the continuum of running water system", and Danilov P. I. "Introduction of North-American semiaquatic mammals in Karelia and its consequences for aboriginal species") or professionalists of nature protection and environment planning (e.g. Heidecke D. and Klenner-Fringes B. "Studie über die Habitatnutzung des Bibers in der Kulturlandschaft").

However, some slight faults crept in the publication. There are some spelling errors in the text, and mistakes regarding names of paper authors and in participants list. The references of the proceedings of the 1st SSM are advertised insufficiently (mentioned only in the editors' foreword), and unfortunately, with a mistake ("27. Jahrgang" instead of correct "72. Jahrgang").

In the proceedings of 1st SSM [Vorträge aus dem Symposium über "Semiaquatische Säugetiere und ihre Lebensräume" in Osnabrück vom 28. bis 30.8.1984. Z. Angewandte Zool. 72 (1-2), 1985], 20 works carried out on 7 semiaquatic mammal species by authors from only 4 countries (Germany, France, Great Britain, and the Netherlands) were published mostly in German with English summary (13 papers). In comparison to this, the proceedings of 2nd SSM show the increase of importance of the symposium – doubling of participants number and internationalization. We should wish ourself that these trends will be maintained during the 3rd SSM.

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