

Proceedings of the Iowa Academy of Science

Volume 31 | Annual Issue

Article 147

1924

Holbrook's North American Herpetology. First Edition.

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Recommended Citation

Shimek, B. (1924) "Holbrook's North American Herpetology. First Edition.," *Proceedings of the Iowa Academy of Science*, 31(1), 427-430.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.uni.edu/pias/vol31/iss1/147>

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HOLBROOK'S NORTH AMERICAN HERPETOLOGY.
FIRST EDITION

B. SHIMEK

Some years ago the late Dr. Theodore Gill published an article¹ in which he announced the discovery of a fourth volume of the first edition of Holbrook's "North American Herpetology" (1840), of which but three volumes had been known. This copy was found in the library of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, and Dr. Gill's article was based on a report of its contents furnished by Mr. Witmer Stone.

More recently the writer secured (by the purchase of a private library) a complete set of four volumes of this edition, and finds that additional comments upon the rare volume IV are desirable.

Like the Philadelphia copy, the writer's volume IV is "perfectly uniform with the others." The publisher, printer, and engraver are the same, and the text and colored plates are of the same type, though the latter were prepared by ten different artists. Dr. Gill suggested that the large number of artists indicated possible dissatisfaction with the plates which might have led to the suppression of this volume by the author. An examination of the volume, however, scarcely bears out this conclusion.

The plates in the entire work were not utilized in the order in which they were prepared. Though six or seven artists contributed to volume III, most of the plates are the work of Holbrook's favorite artist, J. Sera, and five of his plates were kept over for volume IV, yet his death is reported in volume II of the same edition. Four of the ten artists prepared only one plate each, and one of them is especially commended for a "beautiful drawing." Of the remaining six artists four, namely, Sera, Heiman, Rogers, and perhaps less directly, Logan, are commended for their work in the Introduction. This leaves but Queen (with four plates) and Richard (with six plates) without specific commendation. Richard is the artist of whom Dr. Gill said that "his work required vigorous supervision." Since but six of his plates appear, his work could scarcely have been responsible for any deep dissatisfaction with this volume on Holbrook's part. While the plates in volume IV are not of uniform quality, they measure up quite

¹ Science, N.S., vol. XVII, pp. 910-912; June 5, 1903.

well with those of the preceding volumes and would scarcely call for the withdrawal of this volume. Its scarcity must probably be explained on other grounds.

Possibly the number of errors had some influence, though similar errors occur in all the preceding volumes. These errors consist chiefly of wrong numbers of, or references to, the plates. Dr. Gill attempted to correct these errors, but others (in part probably typographical) crept into his article. Because of the scarcity of the volume it may be worth while to print the entire corrected list.

Volume IV contains plates and descriptions of the following species:

| | PLATE | PAGE |
|---|-------|------|
| <i>Trionyx ferox</i> Schn..... | 1 | 9 |
| <i>muticus</i> Les..... | 2 | 17 |
| <i>Chelonura serpentina</i> L..... | 3 | 21 |
| <i>temminckii</i> Troost n. s. (ms.)..... | 4 | 29 |
| <i>Chelonia mydas</i> L..... | 5 | 35 |
| <i>caretta</i> L..... | 6 | 43 |
| <i>imbricata</i> L..... | 7 | 49 |
| <i>Emys cumberlandensis</i> n. s..... | 8 | 55 |
| <i>pseudogeographica</i> Les. (ms.)..... | 9 | 59 |
| <i>Coluber getulus</i> L..... | 10* | 63 |
| <i>sayi</i> DeKay..... | 11 | 67 |
| <i>melanoleucus</i> Daud..... | 12 | 71 |
| <i>constrictor</i> L..... | 13 | 75 |
| <i>eximius</i> DeKay (ms.)..... | 14 | 81 |
| <i>vernalis</i> DeKay..... | 15 | 85 |
| <i>saurita</i> L..... | 16* | 87 |
| <i>sirtalis</i> L..... | 17 | 91* |
| <i>ordinatus</i> L..... | 18 | 95* |
| <i>sipedon</i> L..... | 19* | 99 |
| <i>rhombomaculatus</i> n. s..... | 20 | 103 |
| <i>leberis</i> L..... | 21 | 105 |
| <i>Bufo quercicus</i> n. s..... | 22 | 109 |
| <i>Coluber amænus</i> Say..... | 23 | 113 |
| <i>Crotalus oreganus</i> n. s..... | 24* | 115 |
| <i>Salamandra cirrigera</i> Green..... | 25 | 119 |
| <i>maculo-quadrata</i> n. s..... | 26* | 121 |
| <i>rubra</i> Daud..... | 27 | 123 |
| <i>haldemani</i> n. s..... | 28 | 125 |

The star indicates that the corrected number is given, or that some other correction is necessary. In the original, plate 16 is marked 17; plate 17 is called XVI in the text; plate 18 is called VIII in the text; and plates 24, 25 and 26 are numbered respectively 29, 30 and 29.

The specific names on plates 10 and 16 are misspelled, the first appearing as *C. getutus*, and the second as *C. sipeolon*.

In his report on this table of species Dr. Gill (who, as noted had not seen the volume) failed to call attention to the corrections related to plates 16 and 17, and gave Holbrook's number for the

plate of *Salamandra quadramaculata* as 27 instead of 29. This error is repeated by Stejneger and Barbour.²

Salamandra maculo-quadrata presents an interesting problem in nomenclature. A foot-note in Dr. Gill's article also calls attention to it. The name first appears *S. maculo-quadrata* in the table of contents preceding the "Introduction" to volume IV, with a specific reference to p. 121, where it is described under the same name, which is again repeated on the following page. Plate 26 (marked 29), facing and preceding p. 121, however, bears the name *S. quadramaculata*. Stejneger and Barbour adopt this form of the name, which appears as *Desmognathus quadramaculata* (Holb).

It is evident that Holbrook meant to use *maculo-quadrata* for the specific name, and that the inscription on the plate is an error. Since the name *maculo-quadrata* is used first in the book, with a specific reference to the page on which the description occurs, it would seem that this species should be designated as *Desmognathus maculo-quadrata* (Holbrook).

Commenting on the discovery of volume IV, Dr. Gill stated that "the only essential change it would entail is the dating back of the first description of seven species, viz., *Crotalus oreganus*, *Coluber couperi*, *Coluber quadrivittatus*, *Coluber rhombomaculatus*, *Bufo quercicus*, *Salamandra quadrimaculata* and *Salamandra haldemanni*." Two errors occur here which should be corrected: *Coluber couperi* (now *Drymarchon corais couperi*) and *C. quadrivittata* (now *Elaphe quadrivittata*) are not described or mentioned in volume IV. *C. couperi* was described in volume III of the 2nd edition, and *C. quadrivittata* in volume I, p. 113, of the 1st edition.

Dr. Gill made no reference to *Emys cumberlandensis*, described and figured in volume IV, and neither Cope nor Stejneger and Barbour mention it in their check lists. Coues and Yarrow,³ however, refer it to *Pseudemys elegans*.

In the general check lists no reference is made to *Coluber ordinatus*, but Ruthven,⁴ refers it to *Thamnophis sirtalis*.

Salamandra haldemanni, reported by Holbrook from Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia, is not mentioned in any of the references at hand, excepting that DeKay (*ibid.*) includes it as an "extralimital species" and copies a part of the description, evidently from the second edition.

² A Check List of North American Amphibians and Reptiles, 2nd ed., p. 20; 1923.

³ Notes on the Herpetology of Dakota and Montana. — Bull. U. S. Geol. Survey, Vol. IV, p. 260; 1878.

⁴ The Herpetology of Michigan. — Mich. Geol. and Biol. Survey. — Pub. 10; 1912.

Many of the names (particularly those of genera) in volume IV are synonyms, according to the Stejneger and Barbour Checklist. In the following list the names taken from volume IV are followed by their synonyms:

- Trionyx = Amyda
- Chelonura serpentina = Chelydra
- " temminckii = Macrochelys
- Emys cumberlandensis = Pseudemys elegans
- Coluber getulus, C. eximius (= calligaster) and C. rhombomaculata = Lampropeltis
- Coluber sayi and C. melanoleucus = Pituophis
- " vernalis = Liopeltis
- " saurita, C. sirtalis and ordinatus (= sirtalis) =
 Thamnophis
- Coluber sipedon and C. leberis (= septemvittata) = Natrix
- " amoenus = Carphophis
- Salamandra cirrigera (= bislineata var.) = Eurycea
- " maculo-quadrata = Desmognathus
- " rubra (= ruber) = Pseudotriton

An early reference to volume IV was made by DeKay. (*Ibid.*) In the Bibliography (p. vi) he lists what is evidently the first edition, "4 vol., 1834, et seq.", though the date should be 1836. With one exception, however, the references to volumes, pages and plates do not apply to the first edition, but are correct for the second. DeKay evidently used the latter, for not only are the references correct for that edition but some apply specifically to volume V. The first edition was published in four volumes, while the second had five. The one correct reference to volume IV of the first edition is that under *Chelonura serpentina*.

Are other copies of volume IV known?