Book Review of *Texas Rattlesnake Roundups* By Clark E. Adams and John K. Thomas

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I am a bred and born Texan and can personally attest that rattlesnake roundups have been an iconic event for the Lone Star state and will likely continue to be for years to come. So ingrained have these events become that I remember having roundup representatives visit my high school and teach us how to locate and gas dens, collect rattlesnakes, and possibly profit from their harvesting.

As a herpetologist I can also add that these events have been the source of controversy for many people in and out of the state of Texas with concerns regarding the sustainability of rattlesnakes and the environmental impacts resulting from the harvests and the use of gasoline. Those whose concerns are less directed towards environmental impacts often consider the events as helpful towards generating large amounts of money and getting rid of rattlesnakes.

Given the length of time these events have been held in Texas, it comes as some surprise that this is the first book providing in-depth information regarding this multifaceted and often controversial practice. *Texas Rattlesnake Roundups* does just that in an easy to read text. I must confess that the modest number of photographs (33) covered the topic well, but I would have liked to have seen twice that number. The photographs range in quality from mediocre to good. This in itself is no criticism, however, since it reflects the authenticity of the authors’ research efforts: many of the images were taken by amateur photographers and accurately depict a previous era of rattlesnake roundups very similar to the way the event is carried out today.

Several colorful and significant individuals ranging from roundup participants, visitors, snake hunters, biologists, and officials working for Texas Parks and Wildlife were sought for information. As a result the justifications for roundups as well as acerbic critiques are presented, and the authors seem to walk a line of impartiality. Although I am wholeheartedly against these events and was hoping to find new information to buttress my opinion, I could not, which adds to the book’s credibility: it’s a title that informs instead of trying to persuade.

For biologists experienced with the roundup issue there will be little new here. The book does, however, provide a quick and easy reference for anyone seeking general information regarding Texas rattlesnake roundups and how they may influence one of the Great Plains’ more notorious inhabitants. **Carl J. Franklin, Biological Curator, Amphibian and Reptile Diversity Research Center, University of Texas at Arlington.**