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## Review of *North American Box Turtles: A Natural History* By C. Kenneth Dodd, Jr.

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**North American Box Turtles: A Natural History.** By C. Kenneth Dodd, Jr. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2002. xiv + 231 pp. Maps, illustrations, bibliography, index. \$34.95 paper.

Box turtles, genus *Terrapene*, inhabit much of the eastern US and some of Mexico. Many herpetologists and naturalists can recount pleasant childhood memories of encounters with these docile reptiles. Offering a wealth of scientific information to satisfy the highly trained herpetologist, Ken Dodd has written a book about a turtle familiar to most of us sure to appeal to the beginner as well.

*North American Box Turtles* is divided into ten chapters covering such topics as evolution; habitats and habitat requirements; activity, movement, and orientation; behavior and the senses; courtship and reproduction; food and feeding behavior; population structure and demography; predators, parasites, and disease; and conservation biology. One can read the chapters sequentially or pick and chose among them. Each chapter ends with a section on future

research suggesting productive ideas for box turtle specialists. The volume also includes a species account of the four species of *Terrapene*, along with range maps, synonymy, identification and description, subspecies characteristics, and life history for each. A useful glossary defines many of the technical terms used throughout, and the reference section provides ample literature for further reading.

What is amazing about a genus with such a large geographic range is how little we actually know about many aspects of its biology. While each of the chapters offers specific details—where they are known—for each species, the reader soon realizes that much of our knowledge of box turtles comes from a few long-term studies. As I read I frequently found myself stopping to ponder possible research questions, and I have no doubt that the book will stimulate much needed further studies of *Terrapene*.

Of particular interest to those of us in the Great Plains is the information concerning the Ornate Box Turtle, *Terrapene ornata*, which is found from South Dakota to Texas and west to Colorado and New Mexico. One of the better investigated species, information on the Ornate Box Turtle is therefore found on nearly every page.

Herpetologists, naturalists, and lovers of turtles will want to add this book to their collection. **Lynnette Sievert**, *Department of Biological Sciences, Emporia State University*.