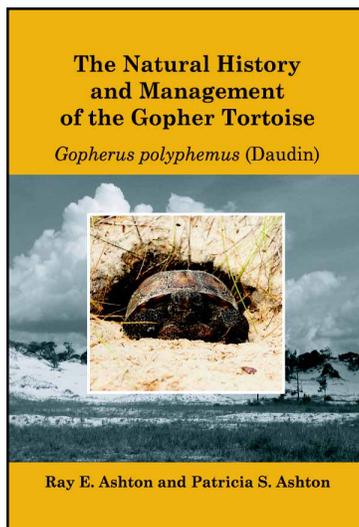


# THE NATURAL HISTORY and MANAGEMENT OF THE GOPHER TORTOISE

(*Gopherus polyphemus* Daudin)

by Ray E. Ashton, Jr. & Patricia Sawyer Ashton

Orig. Ed. 2008    288 pp.    ISBN: 978-1-57524-162-3    \$73.50



This handbook is the first book on tortoise management and research techniques that can be applied to gopher tortoises and the concepts can be used for many species. It is designed to be the manual of basic background information on why and how to carry out field methods for environmental consultants, State and Federal agency personnel, tortoise researchers, and land managers. Many tricks of the trade on how to count burrows, excavate, and trap tortoises are given based on the work of past researchers and the groundbreaking work of the Ashtons. No other publication currently exists that brings together all the methods and techniques for gopher tortoise management which can be used with other tortoises and turtles. Students and environmental consultants working with gopher tortoises and other upland species will find this handbook indispensable.

Ray E. Ashton, Jr. and Patricia S. Ashton have published more than 125 articles on reptiles and amphibians, and are the authors of the three-volume *Handbook of Reptiles and Amphibians of Florida*. They have created some of the most complex and complete management programs for tortoises and other upland species including Florida burrowing owls. Pat Ashton is a field biologist that began her studies of tortoise foraging in the 1970's with Walter Auffenberg. Her new innovative ways of observing tortoises foraging has shed a whole new light on the complexity of their habitat and how to establish carrying capacity. Ray Ashton is now serving his second term on the IUCN Turtle and Tortoise Advisory Group, and is now a member of the Stakeholder Advisory Group with the Florida Wildlife Commission working to develop long-term management of extremely endangered tortoises worldwide. During the past 35 years he has served as Chairman of the Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles (SSAR), Conservation, Liaison Committee with Regional Societies, and Liaison Committee with Zoos. He has served several terms as the co-chair of the Gopher Tortoise Council, Chairperson for the Committee on Rare and Endangered Plants and Animals (FCREPA), and as FCREPA Series Editor (Rare and Endangered Biota Series, University of Florida Press). The Ashtons Biodiversity Research & Preservation Institute, Inc. teaches professional level courses on field techniques to researchers, agency officials and land managers. ABRPI co-hosted the International Roundtable on Chelonian Relocation and Assurance Colonies and The Role of Local Government in Protecting Wildlife, both ground breaking conferences that lead to much of this books recommendations on how relocation and economics of tortoise conservation can work. The ABRPI is the parent of the Gopher Tortoise Conservation Initiative which began the massive effort to educate and mobilize the citizens, governments, and other conservation groups into changing the policies of the FWC before the tortoise became endangered. The Ashton's current studies include ongoing research into chelonian ultrasound communication, long-term results of tortoise relocation and to begin the efforts to change tortoise conservation in the states where the Fish and Wildlife Service manages tortoises since they are federally listed.

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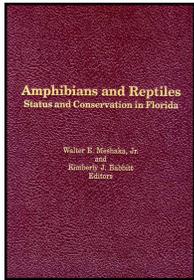
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## Other Titles of Interest

### AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES: Status and Conservation in Florida

*edited by Walter E. Meshaka, Jr. & Kimberly J. Babbitt*

Orig. Ed. 2005 334 pp. ISBN 978-1-57524-251-4 \$80.25

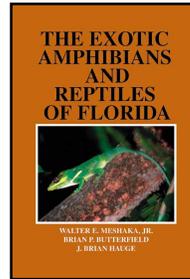


For the first time a broad cross-section of distinguished researchers come together to address the conservation of Florida's rich but imperiled herpetofauna. The 27 contributions represent original research, essays, and reviews that identify contemporary threats to amphibians and reptiles and to the system that supports them. In the Synthesis of the book, Meshaka and Babbitt draw from these works and from prior discussions with the contributors to provide consensus regarding the most important threats facing the conservation of Florida's herpetofauna and proffer clear courses of action to ensure a viable future for this segment of Florida's natural legacy. Ultimately, the reader will see convincingly that conservation of Florida amphibians and reptiles can be achieved at several levels. Readable in style, contemporary in subject matter, this work is a snapshot of the present and a blueprint for the future of conservation action in Florida.

### THE EXOTIC AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES OF FLORIDA

*by Walter E. Meshaka, Jr., Brian P. Butterfield, & J. Brian Hauge*

Orig. Ed. 2004 166 pp. ISBN 978-1-57524-042-8 \$49.25

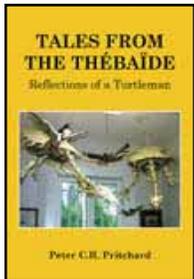


Florida contains more exotic amphibians and reptiles than any other U.S. state. Illustrated species accounts detail the history and nature of each, the mode of dispersal, natural history, and present-day habitat and geographic distribution in the state. The impact of these animals is measured by their presence in natural systems of Florida and predator-prey interactions with native and other exotic species. The authors update the list of the documented exotic species in Florida and provide a progress report on new and published natural history information for each established species. An afterword examines the role people have played in the success of these species.

### TALES FROM THE THÉBAÏDE: Reflections of a Turtleman

*by Peter C.H. Pritchard*

Orig. Ed. 2007 340 pp. ISBN 978-1-57524-277-4 \$51.50



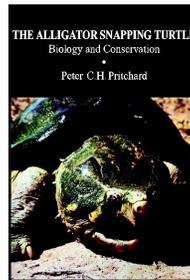
Dr. Peter Pritchard, Oxford scholar, conservationist, world traveler, and Renaissance man, is a multifaceted expert on turtles and tortoises. A cheloniological thread thus runs through his *Tales from the Thébaïde*, as he expands the study of his favorite animals into commentaries upon the universe itself, and includes brilliant, erudite, and always humorous accounts of his adventures in many lands seeking further insight into the shelled reptiles. His preoccupation that important players in his life and in his field should not be forgotten led to inclusion of several in-depth obituaries, including one of Florida's own Archie Carr. His wild adventures looking for tortoises in the Galapagos Islands make up a major section of the book, as does his scholarly discourses on the taxonomic status of sea turtles. There is a long section on why he set up his personal Thébaïde, the Chelonian Research Institute, and his delight in the zany, sometimes unbelievable players of the past who launched their own Cabinets of Curiosities. Pritchard's reflections encompass his love of life, and his hope that his readers will share his delight in people, science, culture, conservation, argument, scholarship, and (of course) turtles.

### THE ALLIGATOR SNAPPING TURTLE: Biology and Conservation

*by Peter C.H. Pritchard*

Orig. Ed. 1989, Reprint Ed. 2006 152 pp.

ISBN 978-1-57524-275-0 Paper \$49.00



Pritchard's monograph on the alligator snapping turtle, one of the world's most impressive, dangerous, and celebrated turtles, was first published in 1989. The initial small print run quickly sold out, and has become a valuable "rare book." This reprint edition duplicates the text of the original, but also includes a major new section outlining progress that has been made on the science and conservation of this species in the last 17 years.

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Down along the Florida panhandle, a gopher tortoise (*Gopherus polyphemus*) finds its way through a community of burrows as morning sunlight cascades across the forest floor. One of the tortoise's many burrow mates, an Eastern hognose snake (*Heterodon platirhinos*), emerges and slithers indifferently beyond the burrow's edge to find a warm spot to sunbathe for the day. Typically, instances such as this one are considered unusual. Remarkably however, the interactions between the gopher tortoise and other wildlife are actually commensal. These creatures benefit from gopher tortoises, but do not affect them in any way. In fact, without the gopher tortoise, the ecosystem in which the tortoise lives, along with the wildlife in it, would change drastically.