ecology and conservation efforts. Each of the following 25 chapters of “The Eagle Watchers” is by a researcher about their specific raptor and describes a particular event during their work. Every chapter starts with a page showing the principal statistics of the species, including its conservation status, followed by a brief biography and a photo of the researcher. It is unfortunate that the black-and-white photos are too poorly printed to identify the person or even distinguish whether they are male or female! Then follows the writer’s essay on their memorable research encounter with their eagle. The essays vary in length from 5 to 14 pages. The authors mostly live in the countries where their research eagles are found, having turned their passion into their livelihood, and many of the researchers spent at least a short period at Haw...
Lastly, I am concerned about the nomenclature used. It seems clear that the authors have chosen to follow the Check-list of the Non-marine Molluscan Species of Northern, Atlantic and Central Europe (CLECOM) by Faulkner et al. (2001) without considering whether these names are appropriate. As has been pointed out by Davis (2004) and Cameron et al. (2006), the CLECOM project is highly controversial, even in Europe. Among the most difficult issues in this checklist are the lack of justification for name revisions and the propensity for the CLECOM authors to be unrepentant splitters at genus and species levels. As a result, the taxonomic principles of Shileyko (1978, 1984), far from being accepted even in Europe, are used without reservation in this field guide. This same approach is used on North American endemic groups that fall outside of the CLECOM region. It is thus common for the generic (and sometimes trivial names for a given taxon) to be altered from the recent literature, even when the integrity of that taxon itself is not questioned. As a case in point, consider the use of Mediaappendix to replace the genus name Catinella. No rationale for this change is given; no references are cited to defend this change. The elevation of this subgenus to genus level has never, from what I can ascertain, been used by any other North American workers in the group, including John Burch, the dean of succinead studies. For readers to know that the Mediaappendix vermeta of this guide is equivalent to Catinella vermeta or Catinella avara of other modern treatments would require considerable skill. I fear that as with CLECOM, many of the generic level changes in this guide may ultimately be found to be whimsical and based on short-lived phylogenetic hypotheses as recent DNA sequence data shows for “Neartula” which turns out to simply be a rather typical “Vertigo”. Changing names to reflect or promote the newest taxonomic “fad” generates unnecessary confusion and potential misinformation. This does the user a great disservice.

Given these limitations, I cannot recommend this book as an identification guide to Canadian land snails. However, where it does shine is as a treatment for introduced slugs. These species have only been curiously treated in previous monographs, leaving most investigators to peruse Michael Kerney and Robert Cameron’s A Field Guide to the Land Snails of Britain and Northwest Europe in an attempt to identify these invasive species. The color plates by Aleta Karlstad of the exotic slugs of Canada are stunning, and the keys to the genus Arion provide the user with an excellent resource in correctly identifying these species. As a result, it may be worthwhile for those interested in Canadian terrestrial gastropods to buy this book to simply serve as an invasive slug guide.

The fact that this publication does not in fact serve as a usable field guide for the Canadian terrestrial gastropod fauna is disappointing. Mollusks rank only behind arthropods in their contribution to global diversity. And, of the mollusks, terrestrial gastropod species (e.g., land snails and slugs) make a surprisingly large portion, with their estimated 40 000 species representing up to one-third of all known mollusks. Land snails are found from tropical forests to the arctic tundra, from deserts to peatlands, and from natural to urban jungles. Almost every yard, roadside verge, and forest will support at least some species, many with singularly beautiful shells. And yet, this group of species remains surprisingly unknown in North America.

There is no lack of resources available to allow identification of birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fish, trees, grasses, wildflowers, butterflies, and etc. to the species (and often sub-species) level. And, at least partially as a result, there are legions of people who have taken an interest in these planetary neighbours, and may even speak out now and again when human actions threaten them. Kerney and Cameron’s western European guide has been issued in English, French, and German versions. The fact that amateur land snail enthusiasts are more frequent ‘across the pond’ is due I am sure in part to the fact that this field guide exists. This has helped our European counterparts to be able to make local, national, and regional governments responsive to the plight of land snails. For instance, conservation groups held up construction of the A34 Newbury Bypass in Berkshire, England for almost three years due in part to the presence of the 3 mm tall Vertigo mouliniana along the proposed right-of-way. I doubt this could have happened without the existence of Kerney and Cameron.

But, none of this can be said for North America, where terrestrial gastropods remain almost unknown to naturalists. I would be surprised if much more than 100 people across the continent could identify even half of their regional fauna. The general public remains almost completely ignorant of even the existence of these organisms. And, as long as they remain unknown and unappreciated, they will be given no consideration in terms of policy decisions. There is a crying need for more publications to make this diverse and interesting group accessible to a larger segment of our society, and I look forward to the day that this is ultimately done for the entirety of the Canadian fauna.

**Literature Cited**


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