

Conservation of Caribbean Island Herpetofaunas

Volume 1: Conservation Biology and the Wider Caribbean

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BRILL

LEIDEN • BOSTON
2011

Cover photo: *Pristimantis urichi*, endemic to Trinidad and Tobago, from Trinidad (photo by A. Hailey). IUCN Status: Endangered.

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

ISBN 978-90-04-18395-7 (volume 1)
ISBN 978-90-04-19408-3 (volume 2)
ISBN 978-90-04-19410-6 (set)

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Preface

A set of reviews on the Conservation of Caribbean Island Herpetofaunas was originally proposed, in August 2005, as a special issue of the journal *Applied Herpetology* under the guest editorship of herpetologists at the three campuses of the University of the West Indies, with the encouragement of the journal's Editor-in-Chief, Mike Tyler. What proved to be the first part of a series was published in August 2006, and as the project expanded five parts were issued up to April 2009. Those included several non-review papers and others that were independently submitted to the journal and edited by Mike Tyler and then incorporated into the series (contents are listed at <http://www.ahailey.f9.co.uk/appliedherpetology/cariherp.htm>). *Applied Herpetology* ceased publication at the end of 2009, still leaving several invited papers for the Caribbean series in various stages of completion. Brill, the publishers of the journal, agreed to reprint (with addenda giving updated information) the review papers from *Applied Herpetology* and the subsequently completed papers in book form. The first volume includes the non-geographic reviews (on taxa or issues), plus three reviews on territories that form part of the wider Caribbean region but are not biogeographically part of the West Indies. The second volume includes geographic reviews on the West Indies proper. Of the 26 papers in the two volumes, about a third (9) are new and the remaining 17 were previously published in *Applied Herpetology*. Apart from the Introduction, all the papers have been through the same assessment procedure of the original journal, involving at least two independent anonymous referees (to whom we are grateful for helping to maintain the quality of the series), and one or more stages of revision before acceptance. The editor responsible and the original acceptance date are indicated for each paper.

Our aim was to provide a comprehensive set of articles detailing conservation concerns and actions on the amphibians and reptiles (including sea turtles) of the territories (islands or island groups) of the wider Caribbean, a region of notable biodiversity. The participation of Caribbean-based authors was especially encouraged. It was expected that the level of detail would vary among papers, depending on island size and herpetological richness, and the amount of published work available. Subjects for consideration included the general ecology of the islands; their human history, especially relating to development; major environmental problems; conservation legislation; protected areas relevant to herpetofauna; conservation status of the herpetofauna; notable species or groups; conservation programmes or

ecotourism involving amphibians and reptiles; introduced herpetofauna; and recommendations. The authors have, we believe, provided an exemplary set of papers describing the conservation situation of herpetofauna in the wider Caribbean, and in many cases charted the way ahead for the territories covered. We were unable to source accounts for the remaining territories (although almost 50 contributions were invited), but the gaps will hopefully stimulate new synthesis for those areas. It was economically possible to include only monochrome photographs in either the journal or the book, but colour versions of many of those are available at the web site address above. We thank Dr Margarita C. Cuevas Gozalo, the project editor at Brill for these volumes (and previously for *Applied Herpetology*), for her consistent help.

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