

BOOK REVIEW

BRIAN R. CHAPMAN AND WILLIAM I. LUTTERSCHMIDT, ED. 2019. **Texas on the Brink: Threatened and Endangered Animals.** (ISBN-13: 978-1-62349-731-6, hbk). Texas A&M University Press, John H. Lindsey Building, Lewis St., 4354 TAMU, College Station, Texas 77843, U.S.A. (**Orders:** www.tamupress.com). \$37.00 US, 236 pp , 155 color, 3 b&w photos, 2 drawings, 15 maps, appendix, bibliography, index, 8½" × 11".

In the last 2000 plus years, human activity fueled by advances in technology, agriculture, and medicine have led human populations to colonize all known parts of the world. While human life has flourished, the need to sustain it in a comfortable, enduring environment has led to one of the largest mass extinctions of life on earth. And although the actions of humans can be understood and empathized with, it is important to note the cost it has come with and develop innovative strategies to harmonize the survival of humanity with the natural world. With such a thought in mind, Brian R. Chapman and William I. Lutterschmidt present *Texas on the Brink: Threatened and Endangered Animals*. The book depicts the story of an epic struggle for survival. A battle waged by life in Texas, our very own backyard, against the persistent destructive forces of human activity and even devastatingly the pithy attitude for preservation exhibited by the executive powers. A book, which is only the second of its kind to be published on the endangered species of Texas, highlights the culminating history of biodiversity conservation from the long fought battles to enact the Endangered Species Act to descriptions of the major ecoregions of Texas to descriptions of all endangered and threatened fauna in Texas and finally culminating in a brief glance at the deplorable past and the countless lives that have been lost. Each species description is accompanied with the conservation status of the species, a description for identification purposes, distribution, studied reasons for population decline, and any relevant federal or state documentation that protects the species. Furthermore, each species account is presented by an expert scientist, who has devoutly studied the species including: its biology, ecology, natural history, and current distribution within Texas. At the end of the book, the corresponding species account has a list of cited and relevant literature that provided the foundation for the brief description.

Overall, the tome is a treasure to be consumed, studied, and relied upon by every person in Texas and the world. The authors have thoroughly researched their subject matter and have provided simple, accurate, and invaluable depictions of threatened fauna in Texas. Commentary by John H. Rappole, research scientist emeritus at the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute, prefaces the book. His scathing overview of the lack of human interest in conserving life on earth provides a heightened appeal to the pathos of the reader, and invites the reader immediately to feel the urgency of the subject. An additional preface by the authors themselves highlights their intent for the book, their hopes, and their call to action. As a whole, the text is brilliantly written with personal accounts by authors that immediately appeal to the pathos and ethos, and accurate historical, biological, and legislative accounts, which trigger the logos. It is a book for every person from novice to expert, which can delicately deliver the arduous process for species conservation, highlight the fascinating elegance of every species, and balance the sorrowful account of lost life.—*Farahnoz N. Khojayori, Botanical Research Institute of Texas, Fort Worth, Texas, U.S.A.*