and now, for the first time, Godfrey Merlen's field guide allows Galápagos fishwatchers an opportunity to identify 101 of the most common species. His guide includes: a map with the main diving and snorkeling sites identified; brief discussions about the oceanographic setting, the effect of fishing, advice to snorkelers and divers such as water temperature and the danger of shark attack (as yet, there has been none); comments on the coloration and size of fishes; and a brief list of further references (notably lacking the 1984 Key Environments: Galápagos and the 1987 Oceanus “Galápagos Marine Resources Reserve” volumes). However, it is the 17 color plates which make up more than half the guide that are the real value of this effort. Although none are fine art illustrations, all are color correct and more than adequate to allow for proper identification. A brief paragraph about each of the 55 families (I recognize the presence of 92 families in Galápagos) represented includes notes about their behavior, distribution, and habits. For example, it is interesting to discover that some parrotfishes sleep in mucous cocoons, or about the mating behavior of sex-changed serranids; however, I would have preferred that the author make some mention of the number (even approximate, if available) of Galápagos species within each family, thereby allowing one a feeling for the kinds of fish diversity that exist. Nevertheless, his warning that the skin of pufferfishes of the family Tetraodontidae “is also covered in a highly poisonous mucus . . .” is well worth the price of the volume to any incautious Galápagos gourmet. The author notes, “Dead pufferfishes have been seen surrounded by thousands of dead flies. A human, too, can die from eating a pufferfish . . . .”

Island biogeographers will benefit from the knowledge that the endemism of Galápagos shorefishes is comparable to that of many terrestrial plant and animal groups. This is particularly true for those forms that have short-lived larval forms and are particularly unsuited to pelagic transport. Of the 309 shorefish species now known from Galápagos, at least 51 (16.5%) of them are endemic or shared only by Islas Cocos and Malpelo. The ichthyofauna is primarily Panamic in origin, with 60% coming from the eastern tropical Pacific mainland and 16% from the western Pacific. The remainder are pantropical in distribution or are shared with the western Atlantic. The recent El Niño event has brought records of several new Indo-Pacific species to our attention, as well as a major change in the abundance and distribution of many key species.

Errors are rare in this field guide, which apparently benefited from careful proofreading by the author and fact checking by ichthyologists Leighton Taylor of the California Academy of Sciences and Alwyne Wheeler of the British Museum. Those few errors that I noticed and deserve correction are: substitute “North Equatorial Countercurrent” for “North Equatorial Undercurrent,” and “Equatorial Undercurrent” for “Equatorial Countercurrent” on page 4; substitute Halichoeres dispilus for Stethojulis bandanensis on page 15; and Semicossyphus for Pimelometopon on page 42 (this is a fine nuance of ichthyological nomenclature).

In brief, Godfrey Merlen is to be commended for his fine work, and all Galápagos visitors, be they amateur or professional naturalists, will be wise to include this in their libraries. At $12.50 (U.S.) or £6.95 (British Isles), it is quite a bargain.

John E. McCosker, California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco, California 94118, USA.

REVIEW: GALAPAGOS: THE ENCHANTED ISLES

Authored By: David Horwell

Reviewed By: Gay Ver Steeg

This book is one of a series of books published by Dryad Press on the subject of islands. To quote the publisher, “This is very much a geographical view of islands, but the ideas and study skills used in the
books are not limited to those of the geographer.” This short text (64 pages) is packed with facts about the Galápagos Islands: location, volcanic origin, currents, weather, discovery and settlement, Darwin’s voyage, origin of the plant and animal life, sea life, and man and the Galápagos today.

The history of the Galápagos Islands is well done, covering the buccaneers, the whalers, the early settlers, and the importance of the visit by young Charles Darwin.

The sections on the life on land and in the sea cover food webs, speciation, niches, and island ecology. This is a big undertaking, but the examples are good. There is an informative chapter on how the different animals and plants may have arrived on the Islands.

Scattered throughout the text are questions which the reader is supposed to answer with newly acquired knowledge from the text, through deduction, or by using a reference such as an atlas. This makes the book seem like a “school book.” The drawings add to the text, but some use very small print or are complicated.

The book has a major weakness in that it lacks a definitive focus. The text tries to cover a large scope in very few pages. It tries to be all things to all readers. The last chapter attempts to discuss man’s impact on the Galápagos today. As a summary chapter, it is not adequate, lacking in depth. The book needs an effective summation, but instead ends with a fizzle.

However, the book does not talk down to teenagers and it is a serious effort. It would be appropriate in a science, social studies, or history class. It would be a good resource book for “across the curriculum” projects and classroom or school libraries. It would not be the best choice if it were the only source of information on the Galápagos Islands, but this book would be a good addition to a collection of books about the Islands or about geography. Gay Ver Steeg, Route 4, Porterville, California 93257, USA.

REVIEW: GALAPAGOS: DISCOVERY ON DARWIN’S ISLANDS

Authored By: David W. Steadman and Steven Zousmer
Artwork By: Lee M. Steadman


Reviewed By: Robert I. Bowman

This new “coffee-table” volume, in 8.5 x 11.0 inch format, is a gem! It conveys to the reader in photographs, paintings, and prose, the enchanted feeling of these isles of evolution. This end was achieved through the cooperative efforts of David W. Steadman, a scientist with a “well-honed professional instinct;” Steven Zousmer, a professional writer with two “prestigious film projects” about the Galápagos under his belt; and Lee M. Steadman, a promising young artist whose full-page, lifelike watercolors, depicting all native vertebrate groups (except fishes), are spread lavishly over half the pages of this book.

This ambitious publishing venture begins with a 4-page color spread of dramatic Galápagos photos, followed by a title page, table of contents, 4 more pages of color photos, a page of explanatory remarks about the writing of this book, a 2-page listing of the color plates, a charming 3-page foreword by S. Dillon Ripley—Secretary Emeritus of the Smithsonian Institution and a longtime champion of Galápagos conservation and founding member of the Charles Darwin Foundation for the Galápagos Islands—who recounts his first visit to the Galápagos in 1937, and finally 1.5 pages of acknowledgments. The succeeding pages, forming the bulk of the book, are divided into two parts. Part I is composed of five chapters cooperatively penned by David Steadman and Steven Zousmer. Part II is devoted to the watercolor paintings of Lee Steadman, with accompanying descriptions of habitats, behaviors, and evolution by David Steadman.

Part I begins with the story of David Steadman's

