

We should not underrate parks and corridor systems through urban areas as they can in total contribute to supporting good numbers of bird species even if the diversity is less than nature reserves.

As the writer rightly points out the losses suffered to Singapore birds have been quite disastrous. It is hoped that this well written and illustrated local guide will serve to educate future generations sufficiently to save what is left and ensure that no further species join the extinct list in appendix 1!!

Clive Briffett

School of Building and Real Estate
National University of Singapore



Seashore Crabs of Hsin-Chu City. Ping-Ho Ho & Ming-Shih Hung, 1997. Hsin-Chu City Government. 122pp.

To date, there are already numerous colourful and informative publications on the crabs of Taiwan. These publications have brought to public attention the diversified crab fauna of Taiwan. This new book is the first to report on one localised area - the seashore of Hsin-Chu City.

The aim of this book is to serve as a guide book for the citizens of Hsin-Chu City who are interested in nature and conservation and to be used as a teaching text-book in local schools. Its intention is to bring to public awareness that rapid urbanisation is also rapidly destroying the natural habitat of

the coastline.

Hsin-Chu City, being one of the most densely populated cities in Taiwan, is located on the north-western coast of Taiwan, facing the Straits of Taiwan. The coastal stretch is only 13.5 km but comprises of various habitats to support various kinds of crabs. Hence, the diversified fauna. In this book, 43 species from 10 families are being reported.

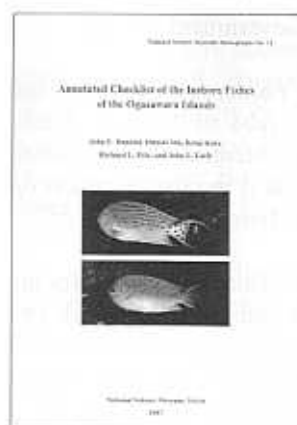
The first chapter of the book gives an introduction to the various types of habitat found along the seashore of Hsin-Chu City. The second chapter, gives a concise morphological study of the crab. The figures are complete with labelling on the different parts of the crab, so that the reader can immediately relate the labels to the different body parts especially when one is reading the diagnosis. This is very helpful for the general public or non-carcinologist because many of the crabs are very similar and morphological characters have to be used to differentiate them. The third chapter is a pictorial guide to the crabs, complete with excellent colour photographs, its vernacular Taiwanese name, scientific name, diagnosis and habitat. The authors have also included the natural distribution of each species besides their distributions in Taiwan. This is one addition feature not found in previous publications.

There are also drawbacks in this book. Despite the excellent photography, many of the crabs were not taken in their natural habitat, rendering it impossible for the reader to directly relate the crab to its natural habitat. This book is a local publication supported by the Hsin-Chu City governmental offices, there is no ISBN number. Hence, it will be quite difficult to obtain or purchase outside Hsin-Chu City or from overseas.

In all, this is an excellent book with colourful pictures. It will, no doubt, be a useful reference to the citizens of Hsin-Chu City as well as any carcinologist or non-carcinologist who can understand Chinese

Ngan Kee Ng

Department of Biological Sciences,
National University of Singapore,
Kent Ridge 119260, Republic of Singapore.



Annotated checklist of the inshore fishes of the Ogasawara Islands. *National Science Museum Monographs*, 11. J. E. Randall, H. Ida, K. Kato, R. L. Pyle & J. L. Earle, 1997. The National Science Museum, Tokyo. 74 pp., 6 figs., 19 colour pls. ISSN 1342-9574

The Ogasawara or Bonin Islands are located off southeastern Japan, between the Izu Islands in the north and the Mariana Islands to the south along the northeastern margin of the Philippine Plate, between the northern subtropical latitudes of 28 and 24 degrees. The present checklist documents the inshore fish fauna of this island group from depths not exceeding 200 metres.

This well-produced publication lists some 801 species of inshore marine fishes from 97 families. It contains valuable baseline information required for the study of marine fish diversity in that part of the Japanese archipelago. Although mainly compiled from literature, field work (many with SCUBA) and examination of museum specimens by the authors have helped to confirm many earlier records, and added 150 fish species for the area. These new records are substantiated in the checklist by citing specimens listed by museum number and length, or with colour photographs taken of wild fish or of freshly-dead and preserved specimens. Several records are even based on confirmed sightings.

Corrections are provided for some scientific names from earlier literature, and old names are updated. The remark "Not seen by us" is attached to species that the authors have not observed or examined, and whose identities they are unable to confirm. Relative abundance (ranging from "Abundant" to "Rare") of each species is given for fishes the authors could easily observe while diving. There is also a section devoted to a discussion of the zoogeography of the Ogasawaran inshore fish fauna which has a combination of both tropical and temperate elements.