

Book Review: *A Field Guide to the Freshwater Fishes of the Kimberley*

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I do not know a lot about fish so I was a little surprised to be asked to review *A Field Guide to the Freshwater Fishes of the Kimberley* written by seven fish scientists and a linguist. But perhaps perversely I do not need to have this knowledge, because this is a field guide written for amateurs. It covers that part of Western Australia north from the Fitzroy River and extends into the Northern Territory to the Victoria and Fitzmaurice Rivers. It includes 65 freshwater species and recognises the existence of several undescribed species. In addition there are a further 33 estuarine or marine species included.

Personally, I was disappointed by a number of impressive-sounding introductory topics including evolution, biogeography, climate change and several on understanding indigenous languages. These fall short of expectations for a number of reasons and should have been completed, renamed or omitted. This is a pity but it does not detract from the value of the book.

Families are arranged into one of three groups: Elasmobranchs or cartilaginous fish; Teleosts or bony fish; and (a small section on) Marine-Estuarine Vagrants with much briefer text, but one needs to be an ichthyologist to understand the family sequences here. Each family is given a brief yet informative introduction. Species at least are arranged alphabetically by scientific name within families.

The majority of the book is devoted to species descriptions, most with at least one photograph and a distribution map with text under the headings of General Features, Recognition, Biology and Habitat, Distribution and Abundance, Conservation Notes, Local [indigenous] names and [reference] Sources for each species.

I like this book and I highly recommend it. It fills a geographical niche and includes some Northern Territory fishes also covered by the long out-of-print *Freshwater Fishes of the Northern Territory* by Helen Larson and Keith Martin (1990). Individual species treatments are excellent, as is the glossary and the illustrated guide to families.

References

- Larson H.K. and Martin K.C. (1990) *Freshwater Fishes of the Northern Territory*. Northern Territory Museum Handbook Series 1, 1–102.
- Shelley J.J., Morgan D.L., Hammer M.P., Le Feuvre M.C., Moore G.I., Gomon M.F., Allen M.G. and Saunders T. (2018) *A Field Guide to the Freshwater Fishes of the Kimberley*. Murdoch University Print Production Team, Murdoch, Western Australia.