

BOOK REVIEW

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Jensen, Gregory C. 2014. *Crabs and Shrimps of the Pacific Coast. A Guide to Shallow-water Decapods from South-eastern Alaska to the Mexican Border*. MolaMarine, Bremerton, WA, USA, 240 pp. ISBN 978-0-9898391-0-5. Paperback and compact disc with e-book, keys, and videos: \$34.95.

Raymond T. Bauer, Department of Biology, University of Louisiana, Lafayette, Louisiana, 70504, USA; e-mail: rtbauer@louisiana.edu

For those in a hurry and who want the very short version of this review, here it is: I really liked this book and found it highly informative, interesting, innovative, and inexpensive. However, such a brief evaluation would not do justice to the book or the readership of JCB. For the details, read on.

This book is a guide to all marine decapods reported from the Gulf of Alaska to the Mexican border inhabiting the intertidal zone to 30 m depth: nearly 300 species. It is intended for use by both amateur naturalists and biologists unfamiliar with the groups covered, but will be useful for the decapod specialist as well. For each species, the author provides a color photograph, most of which are of living animals taken in nature or in a natural setting. The author spent many hours underwater and in the laboratory to take the majority of these photographs, and those from other sources are amply acknowledged. The book size is large, 8 × 11 inches, which allows the high quality photographs to be appreciated, although they are even better viewed in the e-book version included on the CD (compact disc) which comes with the print book.

The print book is organized with the usual front matter including a foreword by Richard C. Brusca and author's preface, followed by the introduction which contains useful general information on the anatomy, biology and ecology of shrimps and crabs. The introduction ends with a helpful "how-to-use" the print and e-book. Species are arranged by major taxonomic categories (infraorder, superfamily, family, genus) for which an overview is often given, especially for higher categories of diverse or otherwise ecologically or commercially important groups. For each species is given its scientific name, author and year, common name (from McLaughlin et al., 2005), color photograph, and single-sentence to paragraph(s)-long sections on: description for identification of living specimens, similar species, size, range, habitat and remarks. The latter contains notes on the species' general biology, ecology, and fisheries (when applicable), much in the style of Terry Butler's (1980) book on the shrimps of the Pacific coast of Canada and Austin Williams' (1984) volume on the decapods of the U.S. Atlantic coast.

The writing style is appropriate for the book's intended readership of layman and professional. The technical termi-

nology needed for species is explained in labeled drawings and photographs throughout the book. The author avoids clutter of the text with citations by giving that data in the e-book (see below). However, at the end of the print book are three pages of references which include some general books on decapods, classic monographs on west-coast species, and other references and suggested readings used to write the introduction and the sidebars which are scattered throughout the book.

A refreshing and attractive feature for a field guide are these sidebars, paragraph to page-long vignettes with photographs or illustrations which give facts and anecdotes about the biology of and natural history of decapods. Several of the sidebars propose hypotheses or make speculations about morphology, behavior, and ecology of west-coast decapods that are meant to stimulate research about them. Short biographical sketches about various carcinologists from the past, especially those with eccentric or unusual lives, are found in some sidebars, as well as quotes from scientists and naturalists from throughout the ages. Other tributes to west-coast carcinologists of note sprinkled throughout the book are reproductions of older illustrations, prints and color watercolors dealing with shrimps, crabs, and other decapods. All of this material breaks up any possible tedium that might arise from viewing a series of species descriptions done in the same mold, although the book would still be interesting and certainly valuable without them.

A downloadable CD accompanying the print book contains the e-book, interactive keys and 16 short video clips. The e-book does not contain most of the introduction nor sidebars but otherwise is a copy of the print book but with an abundance of additional material: 2600 hyperlinks to related material within the e-book, a glossary of terms helpful for the layman or budding carcinologist, a list of other common names given for many species, species synonyms, a list of other books with color photographs for species treated in the book, a multitude of other references (about a thousand), and a list of notes, author observations, and personal communications used for the book. The hyperlinks allow navigation within the e-book, and may lead to a photograph which illustrates a key character; the reference from which a particular bit of hyperlinked information was taken; the reference for the original species description; or a short video clip of behavior or other item of note.

"Errors?" Isabel Pérez Farfante, the noted penaeid shrimp expert (Pérez Farfante and Kensley, 1997; Bauer, 2010), enjoyed telling me that when she finally had a new publication in hand, she would proudly show it to her good friend and colleague Fenner A. Chace, Jr., expecting a word or two of praise. But Fenner, in stereotypical terse New-Englander style, always first responded with: "Errors, mistakes?" In like manner, a book reviewer has to be on the lookout for mistakes and typographical errors. Although there certainly

may be more, especially in a book with such complexity of production, I only encountered one: *Eualus gaimardii belcheri* is given in the index as p. 80 but it is on p. 146 instead; *E. gaimardii* is not to be found in the e-book interactive key along with other *Eualus* species. Perhaps closer examination and use of the book will reveal more, but it is remarkably free of obvious ones. The only other caveat for the potential buyer is that, as a paperback which will be much used in the field and laboratory, and in thus in danger of becoming tattered, I recommend having the book inexpensively hardbound.

Gregory Jensen, from the University of Washington's School of Aquatic and Fishery Sciences, is certainly qualified to write about west-coast decapods. After developing an interest in crabs during childhood in the Pacific Northwest, he has been collecting, and identifying, photographing them in the laboratory and underwater for many years. He began journal publication on west-coast decapods in 1983, along with teaching classes on them and other crustaceans during his long career. His useful and appreciated first version of a guidebook on Pacific coast crabs and shrimps (Jensen, 1995) was well received, albeit with some reservations by Martin (1996). However this 2014 book is a whole magnitude greater in scale, coverage, utility and information content when inevitably compared with Jensen (1995). This 2014 publication is no second edition of Jensen (1995): it contains at least 270 species (versus approximately 160), 240 pages (versus 87) in the print version, and of course comes with the e-book with all the features described above, as well as interactive keys and videos.

With all its wonderful color photographs, features, utility as an identification guide for field and laboratory, and scientific content, the book is a bargain for \$35. It should serve as a model for guidebooks of other taxa. The author is to be congratulated for a handy and innovative book which will lead to greater appreciation and knowledge of shrimps, crabs and other decapods of the western Pacific by divers, students, naturalists, and marine scientists.

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