
January 1989

Bears of the World

Florida Field Naturalist

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/ffn>

Recommended Citation

Florida Field Naturalist (1989) "Bears of the World," *Florida Field Naturalist*. Vol. 17 : Iss. 4 , Article 5.
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/ffn/vol17/iss4/5>

This Review is brought to you for free and open access by the Searchable Ornithological Research Archive at Digital Commons @ University of South Florida. It has been accepted for inclusion in Florida Field Naturalist by an authorized editor of Digital Commons @ University of South Florida. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@usf.edu.

REVIEWS

Florida Field Naturalist 17(4): 84, 1989.

Bears of the World.—Terry Domico and Mark Newman. 1988. Facts on File, New York, NY. ISBN 0-8169-1536-8. Hardcover, 168 color photographs, 8 maps. \$29.95.—Despite their large size, global distribution and often close association with people, bears suffer from tremendous world-wide ignorance. Even in Florida, home of one of the most numerous southeastern black bear populations, many visitors and residents of the sunshine state react with surprise upon reference to bears in our state. And, often, the question that follows is “what kind are they?” Maybe this situation should be expected when one considers that much of the popular literature on bears is sensational, fictional, and most of us are urbanites with less affinity to the out-of-doors than earlier generations.

Terry Domico and Mark Newman have tried to help bridge this information gap with a pictorial and written update of international bear study. Each of the world's eight bear species is represented with a survey of basic natural history and conservation status. Without exception, the authors have made it clear that despite the varying status of the world's bears, they all have suffered from man's intrusions. Interesting and practical sections are included on man vs. bear and personal protection in bear country. These chapters emphasize the problems we have caused these intelligent beasts and the respect they deserve as the dominant forces in their changing landscapes.

Whereas the current knowledge of each species is thoroughly discussed, it often is difficult to attribute the work to a bona fide bear researcher or to the interpretation of the author. Including a complete bibliography, instead of a list of suggested reading of other popular literature, would have solved this minor confusion and also would have provided a practical source for someone in need of primary literature. Another missing item was a large comparative table summarizing and comparing each bear species' natural history and conservation highlights. Columns with common names, distribution, weight, population estimate, hibernation tendency, population status, harvest status, dominant food, threats to survival, etc. with brief explanatory statements or numbers could have been an insightful source for readily comparing these interesting species.

The photographs are quite spectacular especially the North American bears and giant panda. As often is the case with obscure animals, the sun, sloth and spectacled bears are represented primarily with shots of captive specimens. Nonetheless, these pictures generally are excellent as well.

This is a wonderful text for anyone wanting an introduction to bears of the world. If more regional specific information is desired, the primary literature needs to be consulted. “Bears of the World” is an easily read, factual and well illustrated book that should help fill the information gap noted by the authors.—**David S. Maehr**, Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, 566 Commercial Blvd., Naples, Florida 33942.

Florida Field Naturalist 17(4): 84-85, 1989.

A Birdsong Tutor for Visually Handicapped Individuals: A Narrative Introduction to the Sounds Made by Common Birds, Frogs, Insects, and Mammals of Eastern United States and Canada.—Lang Elliott. 1989. Ithaca, Cornell University Laboratory of Ornithology. Two cassettes, \$14.95.—This program was sponsored by and produced in cooperation with the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS),