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# Los anfibios del Monumento Natural Barro Colorado, Parque Nacional Soberania y areas adyacentes

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**Los Anfibios del Monumento Natural Barro Colorado, Parque Nacional Soberania y Areas Adyacentes. The Amphibians of Barro Colorado Nature Monument, Soberania National Park and Adjacent Areas**, by R. C. Ibañez, A. S. Rand, and C. A. Jaramillo. 1999. Editorial Mizrachi & Pujol S.A., Panama. (Order from: bookstore@tivoli.si.edu or Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, Bookstore, Apartado 2072, Balboa, Rep. de Panama). 187 pp. Hardcover. US\$ 20.00, accompanying CD \$15.00 (+ shipping \$ 5.00 to North America, \$ 6.00 to South America, \$10 to Europe, and \$13 everywhere else). ISBN 9962811171.

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This book focuses on the batrachofauna of Barro Colorado Nature Monument, Soberania National Park and adjacent areas. It complements other recent publications on Neotropical amphibians such as those by Rodríguez and Duellman (1994) on Peru, Achaval and Olmos (1995) on Uruguay, and Meyer and Foster (1996) on Belize. The goal of these books is to reach a wider audience than the more technical batrachofaunal summaries—e.g., *Frogs of Boracéia* (Heyer 1990), *Amphibians of Argentina* (Cei 1985), and *Frogs of the Genus Eleutherodactylus* in Western Ecuador (Lynch and Duellman 1997). These geographically focused guides are especially useful to students, amateur biologists, and to the increasingly omnipresent ecotourists roaming the Neotropics. However, they are also valuable tools for beginning biology graduate students who are looking for an “organism” to work on, as well as to the trained herpetologist visiting an area for the first time.

A distinctive and positive feature of this book is its completely bilingual format. This format is targeted toward students and professionals in Latin America and undoubtedly it will be well received there.

The authors provide an informative map of the region with key localities clearly identified and plotted. Good quality photographs are provided for each of the 62 amphibian species occurring in the area. In addition, sonograms are presented for 52 out of the 59 frog species considered.

Each of the species accounts includes an overall description of adults, with a few diagnostic characteristics noted in italics for quick identification, followed by brief descriptions of the calls

and notes on the natural history of the species. A CD complements the descriptions of calls. The sonograms will be of interest to the technical reader, whereas the actual CD sounds would help individuals in the field. The natural history notes include a bit of ecology of calling males and site of egg deposition. Parental care information and the presence of a free-swimming tadpole stage are noted where appropriate. The final component in each species account is a brief summary of key references. These references will point interested individuals toward information for additional studies and details on the biology of each species.

Incorporating tadpole illustrations and descriptions with the species accounts could have strengthened this book. These geographic guides tend to overlook the characteristics of the larval stage, missing the opportunity to produce complete summaries of the biology of the amphibians inhabiting any area. The second, and more important, shortfall is the absence of dichotomous keys for genera and species identification. The inclusion of such keys would have been extremely beneficial for all who would use this book, particularly while visiting the Barro Colorado area. Nonetheless, the authors have done a good job summarizing information for the amphibians of Barro Colorado and this guide will be of widespread use and interest to anyone visiting or working in Barro Colorado and surrounding areas.

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