located. Therefore accessibility is the same for both products, for urban, peri-
urban and rural producers as feed mer-
chants are not located in rural and peri-
urban areas.

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Book review — Boekresensie

Crocodiles – Biology, husbandry and diseases

By F Huchzermeyer


In the past few years, crocodile and alligator farm-
ing has become an expanding enterprise. This
book, influenced by the author’s experience in
pathology and herd health, is a comprehensive
review of the current state of knowledge on these
animals. As such it will be of interest to ranchers,
veterinarians and biologists alike. The book is well
researched, and draws on the author’s extensive
personal experience, published research and
anecdotal evidence. An indication of the quality of
the work is the comprehensive list of more than
750 references available at the back of the book. All
statements in the text are accompanied by the
relevant references for those wishing to pursue a
more in-depth study of the subject. Pathological
and anatomical details are well illustrated, using
colour and black and white photographs and
drawings. Although the medical and surgical
aspects of caring for individual crocodiles are
touched on, the book has a herd-oriented
approach. The relative paucity of this kind of
medical and surgical clinical information probably
reflects the writer’s background, as well as the fact
that little is known about these aspects of caring for
crocodiles.

The book discusses the basic approach to all
crocodilians. One is introduced to the classifica-
tion and basic anatomy of these animals, and peri-
nent differences between species are discussed.
The physiology of sex determination, metabolic
rate, digestion, respiration and response to salinity
are among the subjects dealt with. Immunology,
reaction to disease and blood biochemistry are
discussed. Published normal values for haematol-
ysis and blood biochemistry of different species
are available in the text in table form, all referenced
to the articles from which the values were derived.
Basic behaviour and its practical application, espe-
cially from a captivity perspective, is discussed
throughout the book.

A full chapter is devoted to the examination and
clinical procedures performed on crocodilians.
This includes restraint, blood collection techniques,
sexing, chemical immobilisation and euthanasia.
Drawing on the author’s own experience as a
pathologist, sample collection and the post mortem
examination are discussed in detail and illustrated
with photographs and drawings where applicable.

As with all reptiles, most cases of disease in
crocodiles can be directly attributed to environ-
mental and management factors. As such, a basic
introduction to crocodile farming is an essential
part of the book. Basic nutrition, based on the
current state of knowledge of the nutritional
requirements of crocodiles is discussed, with
examples of the vitamin and mineral supplements
Continued on p. 131
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