

(Hänel and others 2005). There have been books on the other sub-Antarctic islands, but the only one that bears any comparison with the present volume is Selkirk and others (1990) on Macquarie Island, again a volume that provided an important synthesis of all available scientific data. Looking at bibliographic listings for South Georgia, Crozet, and Kerguelen, it is clear that all would benefit greatly from such a treatment, but there seems to be a lack of enthusiastic volunteers willing to undertake the considerable work necessary. Perhaps this excellent volume will stimulate some French and British scientists to bring their islands up to this remarkable standard of synthesis. (David W.H. Walton, British Antarctic Survey, High Cross, Madingley Road, Cambridge CB3 0ET.)

References

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ANTARCTIC FISHES: ILLUSTRATED IN THE GYOTAKU METHOD. Mitsuo Fukuchi and Harvey J. Marchant. Illustrations by Boshu Nagase. 2006. Dural, NSW: Rosenberg Publishing. 136 p, illustrated, hardcover. ISBN 1-877058-46-7. £23.99.
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As a member of the scientific team on the 2004 ICEFISH cruise from Punta Arenas to Cape Town, I had heard that the present volume was in preparation, and I was anxious to see the finished product, especially since our efforts contributed to the collection of some of the specimens of sub-Antarctic fishes depicted in it. The book does not disappoint. Its eye-catching artwork, displayed in coffee-table format, brings the relatively little-known Southern Ocean ichthyofauna out of the formal technical literature and into the 'light of day,' where the true colours and textures of the fishes may be appreciated by all. It is gratifying to see such a book aimed at the general reader.

Antarctic fishes is the result of collaboration between two well-respected authors and a distinguished artist, intended to create a folio of selected fish species celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the first meeting of the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR). As stated in the authors' Preface, this book is not meant to compete with comprehensive scientific works such as *Fishes of the Southern Ocean*. Rather, it is a showcase for Nagase's unique illustrative technique known as gyotaku (literally, 'fish rubbing'), in which an image is created by applying

pigments to fine paper pressed against, and moulded to, the fish's body. Nagase employs the polychromatic indirect method of gyotaku, developed by gyotaku master Kouyou Inada, under whom he studied. The resulting images are lifelike and delicate, befitting the elegant subjects depicted. These are not gaudy, tropical reef fishes but, rather, subtly marked denizens of frigid seas, the understated tones of which provide camouflage against sombre or icy substrates.

Given the primarily artistic, rather than scientific, purpose of this book, the minimal introductory text is useful without being overwhelming. Comprising eight pages, it is succinct, accurate, current, and informative, and consists of three sections: the Southern Ocean (including a full-page map) and its biology, evolution of its fish fauna, and the role of CCAMLR in regulating commercial exploitation of its fish stocks. The last section arguably contains information of most significance to a wide audience. Considering the tenuous state of the world's marine fisheries, the Commission's dual approach to the problem of managing stocks, both precautionary and ecosystem-based, is laudable. A glossary listing 27 terms and a bibliography citing 13 references (five of them art-related and eight scientific) provide basic information for non-scientists. Specialists will forgive the lack of extensive, detailed information and simply relish the captivating art.

A well-illustrated section on the art of gyotaku, showing the master craftsman Nagase at work, indicates the painstaking steps necessary to create the delicate and accurate paintings for which he is well known and highly respected. While the overall quality of the art is exemplary, some of the renditions are more convincing than others, perhaps owing to body shape or condition of the specimen. For example, the illustration of the robust marbled plunderfish *Pogonophryne marmorata*, a species with which I am very familiar, seems a bit off, although that of its close relative, the sailfin plunderfish *Histiodraco velifer*, is more convincing (except for lack of a terminal expansion on the mental barbel that may have been missing from the specimen). It must be more difficult to apply paper to an irregular, rounded body than to a smooth, flat one, which presumably lends itself better to the technique. Frankly, I am mystified by Nagase's skill in accomplishing this feat, while minimising distortion, as consistently and as beautifully as he has over the range of body types represented here. (I guess that is why he is the master!)

Brief accounts of 54 species (representing 15 families), with an emphasis on notothenioids, offer just the right amount of information (comprising, for most species, classification to order, suborder, and family; scientific and common names and their origins; size; geographical and depth distributions; spawning habits; egg diameter; diet; and selected points of interest) to satisfy most readers. While the total length and year of illustration are provided for each specimen, it would have been helpful to know the provenance of each, since

individuality constitutes the essence of the book. These are not composite representations, based on an artist's impressions of many specimens, but, rather, unique portraits of specific individuals. Age accounts for the strikingly different appearances of the two *Dissostichus* species. The image of the 82-cm specimen of the commercially popular Patagonian toothfish (aka, Chilean sea bass) *D. eleginoides* contrasts so noticeably with that of the 23-cm juvenile Antarctic toothfish *D. mawsoni* as to make the two appear unrelated! Two illustrations of Eaton's skate *Bathyraja eatonii* likewise depict intraspecific age- and sex-related variations.

Typographical errors include the misspelling of *Pleuragramma* on page 11, notothenioid and *Patagonotothen* on page 14, *Lepidonotothen* on pages 14 and 136, Notothenioidei on page 50, and the unfortunate misspelling of the first author's name beside his photo on page 134!

Inconsistent mixing of scientific and common names of orders and phyla, such as 'Amphipods' and 'Annelida,' in the Glossary is a minor annoyance. The literal translation of *Pogonophryne* is 'bearded toad,' rather than 'bearded chin,' as stated on page 104.

I highly recommend this important and attractive volume to anyone with an interest in fishes, natural history art, or the biodiversity of the world's oceans — whether from an aesthetic, biological, or conservation perspective. As stated in the Foreword by Denzil Miller, Executive Secretary of CCAMLR, the art of Boshu Nagase 'not only embodies scientific precision, but also provides a poignant insight into an extremely fragile natural world, a world that becomes more fragile every day as demand for the resources located therein begins to exceed reasonable expectations.' (Richard R. Eakin, 31200 Jonston Road, Guys Mills, PA 16327, USA.)