INTRODUCTION TO HORNED LIZARDS OF NORTH AMERICA. Wade C. Sherbrooke. 2003. University of California Press, Berkeley, California. ISBN 0-520-22825-1. 191 p. $35.00 (cloth), ISBN 0-520-22827-8. $16.95 (paper). HORNED LIZARDS. THE BOOK OF HORNY TOADS. Jane Manaster. 2002. Texas Tech University Press, Lubbock, Texas. ISBN 0-89672-495-6. 93 p. $15.95 (paper).—Let me be clear about one thing: I know Wade Sherbrooke. Wade Sherbrooke is a friend of mine. Jane Manaster is no Wade Sherbrooke. But then, neither is anyone else. Let’s face it, Wade Sherbrooke writing about horned lizards is a tough act to follow. Manaster had the misfortune of having her book published at close to the same time as Sherbrooke, thus ensuring that book review editors everywhere (a parsimonious lot) would bundle them, begging comparison. However, such a comparison is really unfair. The books take very different approaches to their common subject and target different audiences.

Having established my professional integrity and objectivity, I can state with some authority that not since Darwin’s Origin has a better or more important book exploded onto the scientific scene. Okay, a slight exaggeration. Truthfully, though, Sherbrooke’s Introduction to Horned Lizards of North America is an outstanding book. Although aimed at a general audience, it will be consulted by professionals for its wealth of natural history information and sifted for its many nuggets of original data. Indeed, a great deal of what we know about horned lizard (Phrynosoma) biology is because of Sherbrooke’s own research. He has spent years in the American southwest as Director of the American Museum of Natural History’s Southwestern Research Station in the very heart horned lizard diversity. He has used this position to advantage, studying horned lizards of all species in the field, in large, outdoor enclosures at the research station, and in the laboratory. There is very little about horned lizards that Wade Sherbrooke doesn’t know, and his vast knowledge informs all of his general writing. The style is clear and straightforward, almost light, but always anchored with the weight of authority. It is easily accessible to amateur naturalists but will also serve as an important reference for professionals on the biology of this fascinating genus of lizards.

Introduction to Horned Lizards of North America is the second edition of an earlier book Sherbrooke published in 1981, entitled Horned Lizards: Unique Reptiles of Western North America (Southwest Parks and Monuments Association, Globe, Arizona). The new edition is revised and expanded to include all the Mexican horned lizard species, as well as new and updated material. It is published as part of the University of California Press’ Natural History Guide series. Sherbrooke has maintained the organization and many figures of the original, as well as much of the text, but the new edition is significantly improved, and the change from pamphlet to book form is welcome. A bit too large to put in one’s back pocket, it remains small and light enough to carry easily into the field. Its size and organization make it serviceable as a field guide, but the text is dominated by a discussion of horned lizard natural history, rather than species identification.

The book is divided into three main sections: Introduction, Species Accounts, and Natural History. The Introduction provides very nice, brief overviews of biogeography, the role of weather in ecology, evolutionary history, species identification, the diversity of form, and phylogeny. An especially nice feature of this section is a color-coded flow diagram that serves as a key to the species of Phrynosoma. Each species is identified by a unique color silhouette of the lizard’s head illustrating its particular pattern of cranial horns (or lack thereof). These species-specific icons are maintained throughout the book, as in the range maps and species accounts. The Species Accounts provide concise descriptions of identifying features, explanations of Latin binomials, and information about range and habitat. The taxonomy is up to date, incorporating, for example, the molecular findings and taxonomic recommendations of Zamudio et al. (1997), suggesting that the Pygmy Horned Lizard is restricted to the Pacific Northwest (Phrynosoma douglasii, sensu stricto). The remaining, widespread populations formerly included in this species constitute a new taxon, the Short-Horned Lizard (Phrynosoma hernandesi). In general, Sherbrooke is conservative in his recognition of taxa, tending to relegate controversial species to subspecific status within bet-