MAMMALS OF NORTH AMERICA BY ROLAND W. KAYS AND DON E. WILSON. 2002. 240 PP. PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS, PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY. $19.95 (PAPERBACK), $52.50 (CLOTH). A REVIEW BY DONALD W. KAUFMAN, DAWN M. KAUFMAN, AND GLENNIS A. KAUFMAN.

Given the interest in environmental and conservation issues, the need for high quality, up-to-date field guides, which can be carried easily by a variety of users, has increased dramatically in recent years. How is Kays and Wilson's book an improvement over other guides focused on mammals? This new guide (part of the Princeton Field Guides series) is relatively small, can be used more easily than many previous guides, presents useful characteristics and current distributions, and includes drawings that clearly illustrate the appearance of mammals found in North America north of Mexico. Thus, this volume should prove useful both to college students in mammalogy and vertebrate zoology and to members of the general public interested in conservation issues, natural history, and mammal watching. For professional mammalogists, the informal and descriptive organizational style might at first be awkward; however, this style of organization likely will prove highly functional to amateur naturalists. Further, Kays and Wilson have produced the most comprehensive and up-to-date field guide now available, in terms of taxonomy and distributional ranges, for North American mammals.

The 442 mammalian species covered in the guide include extant native species, extinct species, tropical species occasionally found north of Mexico, and some exotic (introduced) species. For each species, the authors provide common and scientific names, a quality illustration of appearance, a short species account, and a distribution map plus added illustrations of external features or skeletal material where needed. Illustrations of tracks, scat, and other sign for selected species also are provided.

To help distinguish among mammal types, a "Quick Mammal ID Chart" provides 2 levels of descriptors, which categorizes mammals into general groups (not always orders or families). Descriptor 1, for example, places mammals into 7 groups—Flying or Gliding Mammals, Seagoing Mammals, Hoofed Mammals, Carnivores, Medium-sized Mammals, Small Mammals, and Very Small Mammals. These 7 groups are subdivided further using Descriptor 2 to yield 36 groups of mammals. Examples of Descriptor 1 + 2 include "Seagoing Mammals + Very Large" which leads to whales, "Medium-sized Mammal + Quills" to porcupines, and "Small Mammals + Stripy Face" to chipmunks. This system should be beneficial to those relatively unfamiliar with mammals.

Kays and Wilson use a layout in which the account and range map (thumbnail sketch) are on one page and associated illustrations on the facing page. This is a special strength in contrast to guides where illustrations (artwork or photographs) are found in sepa-