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Bonilla y Asociados
desde 1950



Título: Boas And Pythons Of The World

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Precio: \$320.00

Editorial:

Año: 2011

Tema:

Edición: 1ª

Sinopsis

ISBN: 9780691150154

Few reptiles command more respect than the mighty boas and pythons. Prized for their size, relative docility, and spectacular coloration and patterning, they are the most dramatic snakes in the world. But the same snakes that many consider gentle giants--the Green Anaconda can exceed twelve yards in length--are also finely tuned killing machines. In *Boas and Pythons of the World*, renowned snake expert Mark O'Shea takes readers on an exciting continent-by-continent journey to look at these snakes in their native habitats. Stunning color photographs and intriguing stories from O'Shea's encounters with these snakes in the wild bring these reptiles to life.

There is a tremendous variety of boas and pythons. While the largest are measured in yards, the smallest, the Javelin Sand Boa, is no longer than thirty-two inches. And they inhabit a vast range of habitats on five continents, from stony desert to lush tropical forest. In more than one hundred detailed species accounts, *Boas and Pythons of the World* examines snakes as different as the cryptically patterned Madagascan Ground Boa and Australasia's beautiful Green Tree Python.

Although some of these snakes are capable of attacking and killing humans, boas and pythons are much more likely to be man's victims. Across the world, these snakes are retreating in the face of habitat destruction, hunting, and climate change. Addressing the dire risks they face, O'Shea discusses what can be done to help save what are among our most fascinating reptiles.

Snake expert Mark O'Shea's tour of the fascinating world of boas, pythons, and basal snakes--from primitive blindsnakes to the mighty anaconda

Dramatic accounts of O'Shea's personal encounters with these great snakes in their natural habitats--on five continents

Detailed information about the snakes' habitats and behaviors

Over 150 superb color photographs that capture the diverse beauty of more than 100 species, including rarely seen and endangered species

Two world maps showing the distribution of the various families of boas, pythons, and basal snakes