

BFA SEMINAR SERIES NO. 1

REPTILIA ZAMBESIACA - PROPOSAL AND PROGRESS

Don Broadley

Held at 7 Antelope Road, Matsheumhlope, Bulawayo, on 9 October 2000.

Dr Don Broadley gave a presentation of what the proposed Reptilia Zambesiaca (RZ) would cover and progress made to date. This was followed by a discussion on: (a) what exactly it set out to achieve, (b) the most useful format, (c) its relationship to the proposed Conservation International herpetology mapping project, and (d) BFA involvement and project requirements in terms of funding and assistance.

Don reported that RZ would be a taxonomic and identification work that, in essence, would not directly require any new research or field data. There are still a few taxonomic problems (e.g. amphisbaenians, chamaeleons), but these are being dealt with. About three-quarters of the reptiles of the region have been written up - in fact most was done during the 1980s. The outstanding groups are the snakes and crocodiles. Also, as with Amphibia Zambesiaca (on with the RZ is modelled), there would be a detailed summary section on zoogeography.

After discussion it was agreed that:

- (a) the amount of work remaining to be done to complete RZ is not excessive and there are no major impediments.
- (b) RZ is complementary to, but also dependent upon, the parallel Conservation International (CI) Africa-wide herpetology mapping project being carried out by Don and Sheila Broadley.
- (c) the BFA can assist in sourcing funds for RZ and in publication of the book.
- (d) there would need to be two volumes, totalling 900-1000 pages.
- (e) around 500+ copies would be required. BFA could handle printing in Bulawayo.
- (f) the proposal for RZ funding drawn up in 1994 by Don and Woody is still valid, although with modifications. The major modification is that all databasing activities will now fall under CI mapping project. Funding requirements would be similar.
- (g) Don could finish off RZ in 2-3 years in parallel with the CI mapping project. RZ could be ready for publication by the end of 2003.
- (h) Don would revise aspects of the proposal and prepare a detailed list of contents with an indication of extent by the next BFA meeting in November.