

## INTRODUCTION

Because of their adaptive diversity and, in many instances, unique morphological attributes, bats of the family Phyllostomatidae have long fascinated biologists. Known only from the New World, most genera of phyllostomatids are strictly limited to tropical environs, but some representatives occur as far north as the southwestern United States and others southward to the northern parts of Argentina and Chile; some species also are distributed in the Bahamas and on the islands of the Greater and Lesser Antilles. With the advent in relatively recent years of improved methods of collecting bats (see Tuttle, this volume), a tremendous wealth of information on phyllostomatids has been gathered and it is the purpose of this publication, which ultimately will contain more than 20 individual chapters, to bring these data together in order to assess what now is known about the family and to provide a departure point for further studies.

Owing to the large number of contributions, all of which were solicited by us from persons we felt to be knowledgeable of the subject matter, and the fact that several contributions are necessarily lengthy, the decision was made to group chapters into three parts. Each part will be a separately numbered Special Publication of The Museum at Texas Tech University. In order to establish a workable approach by which reference could be made consistently to taxa throughout the series, the annotated checklist by Jones and Carter was circulated to all authors. Each was asked to follow the nomenclature and systematic arrangement in the checklist or, alternatively, to document departures therefrom. This system, it is hoped, will allow readers to relate information from one chapter to the next without the handicap of conflicting names for the same organism.

Manuscripts for most contributions first were solicited in 1973. Most manuscripts had been received by the end of 1974. As editorial work progressed, some authors provided up-dated information and all authors of chapters in Part 1 had the opportunity to insert limited materials at the time they received galley proofs (in most cases October 1975). Therefore, content is as current as reasonably could be anticipated for a project of this kind. Organization and editorial style follows that established for the Special Publications of The Museum at Texas Tech University. Otherwise, authors were allowed broad latitude concerning material to be included in their chapters. Accordingly, and for obvious other reasons, some chapters will overlap others in content.

Even though some redundancy has resulted, we thought it best to have a section on the cited literature with each contribution. Citations to manuscripts in this collected series are carried in text as "this volume," which does not necessarily indicate that the chapter appears in the same part of the series as the one in which it is cited.

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