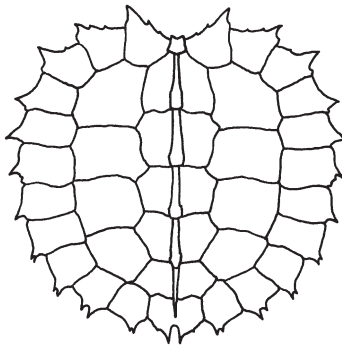


LES TORTUES DE L'INDOCHINE

AVEC UNE NOTE SUR LA PÊCHE ET L'ÉLEVAGE DES
TORTUES DE MER PAR F. LE POULAIN

RENÉ LEON BOURRET



INTRODUCTION BY INDRANEIL DAS



SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES

EDITOR'S NOTE

The original wrappers to *Les Tortues de l'Indochine* indicate the date of publication of the work as "30 Juin 1941." Bourret authored the majority of the work, but F. Le Poulain wrote the concluding section—"Note sur les Tortues de Mer du Golfe de Siam," which appears on pages 213-218 and is accompanied by plates XLV-XLVIII. These are photographic plates and are of very poor quality. In all original copies of the work examined the contrast is very high, with the result that darker portions of the images are almost unrecognizable. Their reproductions in this facsimile faithfully capture what little detail is visible in the originals. Chapter III (Notions sur la morphologie) as well as the keys from *Les Tortues de l'Indochine* were also published separately in Hanoi, along with a one page preface, as "Comment Déterminer une Tortue d'Indochine" (40 pp.) in *Bulletin Générale d'Instruction Publique* (1941).

In this reprint, some minor changes have been made relative to the original in order to save significant production expense. The six color plates originally appeared after p. 126 (Planche A), after p. 150 (Planches B-D), before p. 189 (Planche E), and after p. 192 (Planche F). In this facsimile these plates are grouped and placed following page 136. All black and white plates appear in their original positions.

SSAR is grateful to the Yale University Library for allowing its copy of *Les Tortues de l'Indochine* to be used for the production of this facsimile reprint, to Dr. Indraneil Das for providing the introduction to the book, and to Brian T. Roach for cover design artwork. Publication of this book was supported by the Joseph R. Bailey Endowment and by the generous donations of the patron and sponsors.

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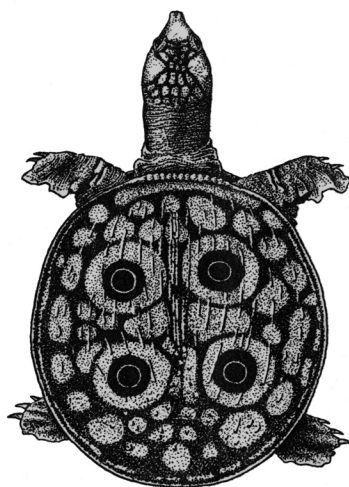
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RENÉ LEON BOURRET (1884–1957) AND *LES TORTUES DE L'INDOCHINE*

Indraneil Das*

French Indo-China, or Indo-Chine Française, comprising modern Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam, as well as the territory of Kwangchowan — a small peninsula along the southern coast of present day Guangdong Province, China, was surely the jewel in the crown of France's colonial holdings. From 1859 until the end of the bitter Franco-Viet Minh War (1946–1954), France sent many of her sons to this, arguably her greatest colony. Among the earliest travelers of note were Henri Mouhot (1826–1861), pioneering photographer, scientific collector and writer and François Garnier (1839–1873), naval officer and explorer of the Mekong (circa. 1886). Mouhot is credited with the discovery, or at least extensive documentation (based on a visit in 1859), of the temples of Angkor-Wat, a fabulous lost city in the middle of a jungle in what is now Cambodia, whereas Garnier was a staunch nationalist, set on outdoing British colonial achievements. They were followed by many biologists, geologists, geographers and others whose accumulated discoveries constitute part of the substantial French contribution to the science and exploration of the Far East.

One such person was René Leon Bourret (born 28 January 1884), geologist and herpetologist. Born in Nérac, Lot-et-Garonne, France, in 1900 he went to Tonkin (Tonkijn in the French of the early colonial period, and Dong Kinh in contemporary Vietnamese, meaning 'Eastern Capital'), now Hanoi, in Indochina to join the military. By 1907, he was a surveyor (he subsequently received a doctorate in geology from the Université de Toulouse) at the Cadastral Survey, serving as an assistant at the Mining and Geographical Survey after World War I. During this time, he published papers on the geology of Tonkin and Laos. Bourret's herpetological publications include a series of 25 "Notes herpétologiques sur l'Indochine française," in addition to several shorter guides and longer monographs on the herpetofauna of the region, in which he described his collections from Indo-China. These contributions include new distributional records as well as the descriptions of many new species and subspecies. Remarkably, Bourret remained in Indochina during the Japanese occupation (1943–1945).

Les Tortues de l'Indochine (hereafter *Les Tortues*), published in 1941, is a companion volume to Bourret's major treatises on snakes (1936a; 1936b) and amphibians (1942). It was published as the 38th in the series *Notes de l'Institut Océanographique de l'Indochine*, which in Bourret's time was edited by the Institute's directors, Armand Krempf and Pierre Chevey, and published at the Station Maritime de Cauda, Province de Nhatrang (Fig. 1). The volume on lizards was completed in 1943, at the height of World War II and the German occupation of France, and was unfortunately never published (Adler, 1989). The primary purpose of these tomes was to provide an update and complement to the *Fauna of British India* series on reptiles by Malcolm Arthur Smith (1931, 1935, 1943), concentrating on

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the fauna of mainland Southeast Asia, extending from southern China (including Hainan), to the northeast Indian states, Myanmar (Burma), Thailand, the Malay Peninsula and of course, French Indo-China.

Bourret returned to France in 1947 and lived the last decade of his life in relative obscurity in Toulouse, dying alone on 28 July 1957. No portraits of Bourret exist in the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris (P. David, pers. comm., 2004) and none have been located elsewhere (Adler, 1989). Bourret's signature is reproduced here from the collection of Kraig Adler (Fig. 2).

Les Tortues describes 25 genera and 44 species (Table 1), and no radical nomenclatural changes are suggested in the work. Using current taxonomy (following David, 1994, Iverson, 1992 and King and Burke, 1989, with updates as cited here) this corresponds to 34 genera and 56 species. One species described by Bourret in a separate paper (Bourret, 1941a), as new (*Testudo hypselonota*) was subsequently shown by Auffenberg (1963) to be a synonym of the extralimital (Madagascan) *Geochelone radiata*. Table 1 provides the current status of the familial, generic, specific and subspecific nomina of turtles dealt with in *Les Tortues*. Remarks include relevant recent references pertaining to nomenclature of the respective taxa.

Following the preliminaries and a short foreword is a table listing localities and their abbreviations cited in the text, and an historical section, enumerating all publications and collections made in the region, commencing with those of Mouhot, and ending with those



Figure 1. The new main building (completed 2001) of the Institute of Oceanography, at Nha Trang, Vietnam, as seen in 2004. This replaced the earlier marine station where *Les Tortues de l'Indochine* was published. Photo by Indraneil Das.

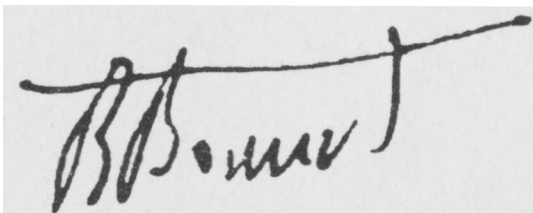


Figure 2: Signature of René Leon Bourret (1884–1957). Courtesy of Kraig Adler.

in the Laboratoire des Sciences Naturelles de l'Université Indochinoise (Chapter I). Chapter II is the bibliography, running to 26 printed pages. The part on morphology is extensive for a regional faunal work of this nature (14 pages), and includes details of the morphology of the carapace, skull, head and limbs (Chapter III). Chapter IV deals with regional turtle diversity, and includes a brief categorization of species according to habitat and elevation. Chapter V identifies subregions within Indo-China and outlines the turtle fauna of each. This chapter also includes a biogeographic analysis of the fauna. Chapter VI includes several keys to aid identification of the species. The first one is based on external characters, the second, exclusively on the basis of cephalic pigmentation and cephalic morphology, the third and fourth on carapaces and plastra, respectively (as might be found during market surveys or in kitchen middens in cave deposits), and the fifth on the cranium. These chapters form the first part (Première Partie) of the book.

Table 1. Correspondence between familial, generic, and species names employed by Bourret (1941b) in *Les Tortues* and current usage.

Page	Bourret's (1941b)	Current	Authority/Remark
117.	Sphargidae	Dermochelyidae	Baur (1890) ¹
117.	<i>Dermochelys</i>	<i>Dermochelys</i>	
118.	<i>Dermochelys coriacea</i>	<i>Dermochelys coriacea</i>	See Note 2
123.	Cheloniidae	Cheloniidae	
124.	<i>Eretmochelys</i>	<i>Eretmochelys</i>	
124.	<i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i>	<i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i>	
125.	<i>Chelonia</i>	<i>Chelonia</i>	
125.	<i>Chelonia mydas</i>	<i>Chelonia mydas</i>	
129.	<i>Caretta</i>	<i>Caretta</i> and <i>Lepidochelys</i>	
131.	<i>Caretta olivacea</i>	<i>Lepidochelys olivacea</i>	See Note 3 Girard (1858) ⁴
133.	Platysternidae	Platysternidae	
134.	<i>Platysternum</i>	<i>Platysternon</i>	Gray (1831) ⁵
134.	<i>Platysternum megacephalum</i>	<i>Platysternon megacephalum</i>	Gray (1831) ⁵
137.	Emyidae	Bataguridae and Geomydidae	Bour and Dubois (1986); Gaffney and Meylan (1988)
141.	<i>Cyclernys</i>	<i>Cyclernys and Cuora</i>	McDowell (1964)
142.	<i>Cyclernys mouhotii</i>	<i>Cuora mouhotii</i>	Honda et al. (2002); Stuart and Parham (2004)
143.	<i>Cyclernys dentata</i>	<i>Cyclernys atripons</i> , <i>C. dentata</i> , <i>C. oldhamii</i> , <i>C. pulchricristata</i> , <i>C. shanensis</i> , and <i>C. tcheponensis</i>	Fritz et al. (1997); Guicking et al. (2002); Iverson and McCord (1997)
145.	<i>Cyclernys annamensis</i>	<i>Mauremys annamensis</i>	Iverson and McCord (1994); Feldman and Parham (2004)
146.	<i>Cuora</i>	<i>Cuora</i>	
147.	<i>Cuora amboinensis</i>	<i>Cuora amboinensis</i>	See Note 6
149.	<i>Cuora galbinifrons</i>	<i>Cuora galbinifrons</i> , <i>C. bouretti</i> , and <i>C. picturata</i>	Stuart and Parham (2004)
151.	<i>Cuora trifasciata</i>	<i>Cuora trifasciata</i>	
152.	<i>Geoemyda</i>	<i>Cyclernys</i> , <i>Geoemyda</i> , <i>Heosemys</i> , and <i>Melanocheilus</i>	McDowell (1964)
153.	<i>Geoemyda spengleri</i>	<i>Geoemyda japonica</i> and <i>G. spengleri</i>	Yasukawa et al. (1992)
155.	<i>Geoemyda spengleri spengleri</i>	<i>Geoemyda spengleri</i>	Yasukawa et al. (1992)
155.	<i>Geoemyda trijuga</i>	<i>Melanocheilus trijuga</i>	McDowell (1964)
156.	<i>Geoemyda trijuga edeniana</i>	<i>Melanocheilus trijuga edeniana</i>	McDowell (1964)
157.	<i>Geoemyda tcheponensis</i>	<i>Cyclernys tcheponensis</i>	Fritz and Ziegler (1999) ⁷
158.	<i>Geoemyda spinosa</i>	<i>Heosemys spinosa</i>	McDowell (1964)
159.	<i>Geoemyda depressa</i>	<i>Heosemys depressa</i>	McDowell (1964)
160.	<i>Geoemyda grandis</i>	<i>Heosemys grandis</i>	McDowell (1964)
161.	<i>Damonia</i>	<i>Malayemys</i>	McDowell (1964)

**Table 1. (continued)
Page Bourret's (1941b)**

	Current	Authority/Remark
162.	<i>Damonia subtrijuga</i>	<i>Malayemys macrocephala</i> and <i>M. subtrijuga</i> Brophy (2004)
163.	<i>Hieremys</i>	
163.	<i>Hieremys amandatalei</i>	<i>Hieremys amandatii</i>
165.	<i>Notochelys</i>	<i>Notochelys</i>
165.	<i>Notochelys platynota</i>	<i>Notochelys platynota</i>
166.	<i>Siebenrockiella</i>	<i>Siebenrockiella</i>
167.	<i>Siebenrockiella crassicollis</i>	<i>Siebenrockiella crassicollis</i>
168.	<i>Clemmys</i>	<i>Mauremys and Sacalia</i>
169.	<i>Clemmys mutica</i>	<i>Mauremys mutica</i>
170.	<i>Clemmys quadriocellata</i>	<i>Sacalia quadriocellata</i>
171.	<i>Ocadia</i>	<i>Mauremys</i>
172.	<i>Ocadia sinensis</i>	<i>Mauremys sinensis</i>
173.	<i>Morenia</i>	<i>Morenia</i>
173.	<i>Morenia ocellata</i>	<i>Morenia ocellata</i>
175.	<i>Annamemys</i>	<i>Mauremys</i>
175.	<i>Annamemys merklei</i>	<i>Mauremys annamensis</i>
176.	<i>Kachuga</i>	<i>Kachuga and Pangshura</i>
177.	<i>Kachuga kachuga</i>	<i>Kachuga kachuga</i>
178.	<i>Kachuga trivittata</i>	<i>Kachuga trivittata</i>
179.	<i>Batagur</i>	<i>Batagur</i>
180.	<i>Batagur baska</i>	<i>Batagur baska</i>
181.	<i>Geoclemys palaeannamitica</i> [†]	<i>Mauremys nigricans</i>
185.	Testudinidae	Testudinidae
185.	<i>Testudo</i>	All genera within the family, within the scope of this work, <i>Geochelone</i> , <i>Indotestudo</i> , and <i>Manouria</i>
186.	<i>Testudo platynota</i>	<i>Geochelone platynota</i>
187.	<i>Testudo hypselonota</i>	<i>Geochelone radiata</i>
188.	<i>Testudo elongata</i>	<i>Indotestudo elongata</i>
189.	<i>Testudo emys</i>	<i>Manouria emys playeri</i>
191.	<i>Testudo impressa</i>	<i>Manouria impressa</i>
193.	Trionychidae	Trionychidae
194.	<i>Lissemys</i>	<i>Lissemys</i>
194.	<i>Lissemys punctata</i>	<i>Lissemys punctata</i> and <i>L. scutata</i>
195.	<i>Lissemys punctata punctata</i>	<i>Lissemys punctata andersoni</i>
		McDowell (1964)
		Feldman and Parham (2004)
		Fu and Zhao (1989); Iverson and McCord (1992)
		Feldman and Parham (2004); Spinks et al. (2004)
		Feldman and Parham (2004); Spinks et al. (2004)
		Feldman and Parham (2004); Spinks et al. (2004)
		Feldman and Parham (2004); Spinks et al. (2004)
		Savage (1953); Feldman and Parham (2004)
		Spinks et al. (2004)
		Bour (1980b); Pritchard (1994)
		Bour (1980a); Obst (1983)
		Bour (1980a)
		Auffenberg (1963)
		Crumly (1982); Crumly (1984); Iverson et al. (2001)
		Crumly (1984); Obst (1984)
		Crumly (1983); Obst (1984)
		Webb (1982)
		Webb (1980)

Table 1. (continued)

Page	Bourret's (1941b)	Current	Authority/Remark
196.	<i>Lissemys punctata scutata</i>	<i>Lissemys scutata</i>	Webb (1982)
197.	<i>Pelochelys</i>	<i>Pelochelys</i>	
197.	<i>Pelochelys bibronii</i>	<i>Pelochelys cantorii</i>	Webb (1995)
198.	<i>Chitra</i>	<i>Chitra</i>	
199.	<i>Chitra indica</i>	<i>Chitra chitra</i> and <i>C. indica</i>	See Note 8
200.	<i>Dogania</i>	<i>Dogania</i>	Meylan (1987)
200.	<i>Dogania subplana</i>	<i>Dogania subplana</i>	Meylan (1987)
201.	<i>Trionyx</i>	Several genera within the family; within the scope of this work, <i>Amyda</i> , <i>Aspideretes</i> , <i>Nilssonina</i> , <i>Palea</i> , <i>Pelodiscus</i> , and <i>Rafetus</i>	Meylan (1987)
203.	<i>Trionyx hurum</i>	<i>Aspideretes hurum</i>	Meylan (1987)
204.	<i>Trionyx formosus</i>	<i>Nilssonina formosa</i>	Meylan (1987)
205.	<i>Trionyx cartilagineus</i>	<i>Amyda cartilaginea</i>	Meylan (1987)
207.	<i>Trionyx sinensis</i>	<i>Pelodiscus sinensis</i> and <i>Rafetus swinhoi</i>	Farkas and Fritz (1998); Meylan (1987); Meylan and Webb (1988); Pritchard (2001)
210.	<i>Trionyx steindachneri</i>	<i>Palea steindachneri</i>	Meylan (1987)

Notes:

- ¹Baur (1890) provided the first use of the family-group name spelling, Dermochelyidae. See Smith and Smith ("1979" 1980) for a nomenclatural history.
- ²Authorship of the nomen *Dermochelys coriacea* was attributed by Bourret to Linnaeus. Bour and Dubois (1983) showed that the authority should be Vandelli (1761), despite arguments to the contrary by Rhodin and Smith (1982).
- ³Bourret's (1941b) concept, a reflection of his time, was a composite of *Caretta* and *Lepidochelys*.
- ⁴*Lepidochelys olivacea* implied, but name-combination not used by Fitzinger (1830); name-combination first used by Girard (1858); nomen generally stable following Deraniyagala (1934) and Carr (1942); see Smith and Smith ("1979"1980) for a nomenclatural history.
- ⁵*Platysternon* is the original spelling by Gray (1831), and was wrongly emended to *Platysternum* by Günther (1864). Five subspecies names that are generally recognized, including *megacephalum* Gray, 1831, *peguense* Gray, 1870, *shuii* Ernst and McCord, 1987, *tristernalis* Schleich and Gruber, 1984, and *vogeli* Wermuth, 1969, were evaluated by Ernst and Laemmerzahl (2002), who considered *vogeli* a synonym of *peguensis*, and *tristernalis* a synonym of *megacephalum*.
- ⁶Five subspecies names of *Cuora amboinensis* have been proposed/revived in recent years, including *amboinensis* (Daudin, 1801 "1802"), *cuoro* (Schweigger, 1812), *lineata* McCord and Philippen (1998), and *kamaroma* Rummier and Fritz (1991).
- ⁷*Geomyda tcheponeensis* was tentatively synonymized under *Cyclenys dentata* by McDowell (1964).
- ⁸The recently described *Chitra vandijki* McCord and Pritchard, "2002" 2003, is not included within Bourret's (1941b) concept of *Chitra indica*, as he did not examine specimens from Myanmar.

The species descriptions form the bulk of the book (Deuxième Partie). Following a short introduction are keys to what were then considered suborders within the group (Athecae and Thecophora), and keys to the families of turtles in the region (covering Sphargidae, Cheloniidae, Platysternidae, Emydidae, Testudinidae and Trionychidae). Sections within each familial account include a few descriptive lines, the etymology of the familial name, and a listing of its constituent species in the region. Chresonymies for species names are extensive (but incomplete) and individual species accounts include morphology (including maximum length attained) and notes on their ecology and conservation. A plate accompanies each of the species descriptions, showing the animal in lateral view, as well as miscellaneous other views of other parts, such as close-up of the head, of limbs, plastra, plastral bones, cranium, etc. The work concludes with an annexure of four pages of text (and four plates) by F. Le Poulain, Chef du Service Technique et Economique des Pêches de l'Institut Oceanographique (established 1922, which was to become the headquarters of the Institute of Oceanography in 1993), entitled 'Note sur les tortues de mer du Golfe de Siam.'

Bourret's *Les Tortues* set a new benchmark for the herpetology of Indo-China, but there were to be no followers for the next half a century, which was marked by intense turmoil and political upheaval. As a result, the turtle fauna of former French Indo-China remains poorly-known, as does the rest of the region's biota.

Nonetheless, there are signs that this is changing, with growing international interest in both the conservation biology of the fauna and its systematic study (see for instance, Stuart and Platt, 2004). A number of modern field guides to the turtles of Indo-China and adjacent areas covered by Bourret are now available: Stuart et al. (2001) covers Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam, Nutaphand (1979) published a work on the turtles of Thailand, the guide by Lim and Das (2000) covers Peninsular Malaysia and Borneo, and finally, the field guide by Maung Win and Ko Ko Win (2002) covers the turtles of Myanmar.

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