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Foreword

From softshells to sea turtles, pond turtles, sidetrack turtles, and physiological differences are tremendous in the world that no one person is able to retain all knowledge on any one group, turtle or tortoise. Dieter Gramentz, a German biologist, dedicated over 15 years of study and travel to understanding the biology of African flapshells, and his prior monograph on *Trionyx triunguis* no doubt helped him to appreciate JOHN E. GRAY and WILHELM KILBINGER. I dedicate this book to them—a generous gesture.

Prior to DIETER GRAMENTZ's efforts accessible to most people for *Cyclanorbis elegans*. The detail given here on the structure of data presentation resembling a taxonomist and serious hobbyist alike. Complete synonymies, diagnoses and descriptions are given to help the reader identify flapshell turtles. Skull and shell morphology and plastral callosities occurring with ontogenetic development were a source of confusion in the past. Habitat requirements, pH, and temperature are clearly explained. Distribution mechanisms and genetic data are also given. Illustrations of species, are given from both past and present records.

What many cannot appreciate about this work is the work accomplished in Africa. Having limited prior experience in turtle care is like COLUMBUS discovering the New World in 1492, almost 20 years ago! He had to arrange for a ship, worry about diseases unknown to westerners, permits never before granted to study turtles outside of Europe, be hired and trusted; he survived exposure to harsh conditions, and he organized the massive cooperation of African flapshell turtle researchers cited in this book.

Another feature noticed when looking through the photos the author took himself and gathered from other people, reader with the species covered here, but add your own observations.

All in all, this book is "state-of-the-art" work on African flapshell turtles, and the author deserves to be recognized for his Chelonian knowledge.