and Xenopus that comprise no more than 0.2% of the species in the class. Therefore, generalizations about "the frog" derived from these studies are not likely to characterize other amphibians accurately, nor can the characteristics they identify be taken as representing an evolutionary link between "the fish" and "the rat." Feder details a number of common misconceptions that result from an incomplete understanding of the diversity of lifestyles and habits of amphibians.

Although most of the contributors to this volume utilize a comparative approach in their own research by studying members of other classes along with amphibians, some chapters lack the benefits of such a viewpoint. Avian endocrinology, under the leadership of John Wingfield, has moved out of the laboratory into the field, and one of the resulting findings is that the hormonal profile of an animal in the laboratory often bears little resemblance to that of a member of the same population in the wild. Comparisons of reptilian endocrinology in the field and laboratory by Paul Licht have yielded similar results. The chapter on endocrinology in this volume not only fails to specify whether a particular finding was obtained in the laboratory or in the field but does not discuss the possibility that future laboratory research

should be complemented by field studies.

In the last few years considerable attention has been focused on the worldwide decline or extinction of amphibian populations, a problem the scope of which only became evident while the book was in preparation and that receives little attention in it. The environment of amphibians includes more than just heat, gases, water, and ions, and amphibians are now confronted with as yet unidentified environmental changes involving pH, heavy metals, pesticides, ultraviolet radiation, pathogens, or toxins that have recently exceeded their tolerance levels. Environmental physiologists need to join in efforts to identify the causes of amphibian extinctions and to try to reverse the trend. Additionally, new areas of study not represented in this book, such as immune function, need to be explored. Though some physiological ecologists may hesitate to become engaged in what appears to be "applied" research, the message is clear: the directions for future research detailed in this book may become impossible to pursue because few amphibians will be available for study.

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