Conference proceeding: An overview of East African amphibian studies, past, present and future: A view from Tanzania

Abstract

German explorers and scientists began the study and description of the East African amphibian fauna. Later, Arthur Loveridge played a leading role in collecting, describing and analysing the East African amphibian fauna; his 1957 checklist for the region is still the only one available. Since independence in the early 1960s, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda developed different degrees of capability to conduct research on amphibians. While globally there has been a recent upsurge in research and concern over declining amphibian populations and a general increase in awareness of the importance of amphibian biodiversity, in the East African region this interest has not always been so apparent. Limitations to amphibian study in East Africa include a lack of basic taxonomic studies, field guides and keys to the amphibian fauna, few natural history museums, and a dearth of basic information about the distribution and biology of amphibians. There is a need to determine the conservation status of East African amphibians, encourage studies on basic biology and populations, and to include amphibians in development and conservation policies and agendas.

Key words

Amphibia,
East Africa,
taxonomy,
herpetological studies