

Dedication

To the extent we could recall, we placed everyone who directly helped in this project onto our **Acknowledgments** page. The individuals whom we recognize here helped us indirectly, yet, as you will see, ever so importantly.

OUR DEDICATION

To Those With Whom We Share Our Days

We dedicate this book to our wives, husbands, children, extended families, close friends, and colleagues who had the patience to tolerate our intense focus (and messiness) during this project's mostly *after-work-hours* and *at-home* production efforts. We beg your kind forgiveness for all undue and unintended neglectfulness this project may have caused.

To You, Our Present Students Who Will Lead Our Islands After Us

We not only dedicate, we pass on this work to you. You are the reason we worked so hard these many nights and days over the years to develop this book. We dedicate our textbook to you, our own children, and those of all other island families, and to their children, and to all subsequent generations.

To Our Elder Island Leaders Who Preceded Us

We dedicate this work to our islands' leaders who have had the foresight to establish our original marine and terrestrial conservation areas, our libraries, and our museums, and to those who work so hard to appropriately add to them. We dedicate this book to those who have made sure our islands' key resource management agencies were/are adequately established, empowered, and funded. Likewise, we dedicate our work to those who insured that education has become and will continue to be our highest civic priority. We especially recognize those who first declared that our children are truly our islands' *most valuable natural resources*.

To All Previous and Current Instructors and Researchers of Cultural and Natural History here in Our Commonwealth

Finally, we dedicate this work to our islands' earlier social and natural history researchers and to those who continue today to study and teach us about our several islands' ecology. We take this moment to thank you for taking the time to teach us that learning about and cherishing our social and natural worlds are vital components of our way of life. Through your efforts, we learned to recognize that we live on a rapidly changing island upon a rapidly changing planet. You provided us your in-

sight and your wisdom. By your personal examples of dedication, sharing, integrity, and pursuit of knowledge, you are and have always been our true role models.

We especially note the inspiration provided by Chandra Sekeran of Marianas High School; Dr. Roger Goodwill, Ravi Chandran and Gerald Smith of the Northern Marianas College; Drs. Douglas Pratt, Phillip Bruner, Gary Wiles, and Oscar Walter Johnson, noted tropical ornithologists; Scott Russell, historian; Drs. Lynn Raulerson and Christopher Lobban of the University of Guam Science Department; Agnes Rinehart, botanist and photographer; Dr. Henry Galt Siegrist Jr., Charles Guard and all of their colleagues of UOG's Water and Environment Research Institute; Drs. Robert Richmond and Charles Birkeland and all of their colleagues of the University of Guam Marine Laboratory, including emeritus professors Dr. Lucius Eldridge, Dr. Roy Tsuda—and Richard Randall—who pioneered our islands' natural history course. To all, thank you.

OUR GOALS & OUR MOTTO

The goals of our text are to teach the main concepts of island ecology and responsible island resource management—including, never endangering our public safety, our welfare, or our ecological and cultural heritage; while, at the same time, providing for both a sustainable economy and a sustainable ecological future. **We believe that with understanding comes appreciation. With appreciation comes stewardship.** Through this writing, we seek to share with you our understanding of these islands' ecology, to encourage you to appreciate the fragile nature of our environmental resources, and to empower you—our island's future voters and resource managers—to be our finest island stewards ever.

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