

Book reviews — Buchbesprechungen — Analyses

The moths and butterflies of Great Britain and Ireland. Vol. 7, part 2 : Lasiocampidae to Thyatiridae, with life history chart of the British Lepidoptera. A. Maitland EMMET and the late John HEATH (Eds). 400 pp., 8 coloured plates, 8 text figures and 28 maps, 26 × 21 cm, cloth. Harley Books, Colchester, England, 1991. ISBN 0 9446589 26 7. Price : £ 55.

The second part of volume 7 of 'MBGBI', which is dedicated to the late Russell BRETHERTON, covers the families Lasiocampidae (12 species), Saturniidae (2), Endromidae (1), Drepanidae (7) and Thyatiridae (9). However, the treatment of these species takes up just 47 of the total of 400 pages. As is customary in this series the systematic section is preceded by special chapters covering various aspects of lepidopterology.

The first chapter, by M.J. SCOBLE, is entitled '*Classification of the Lepidoptera*'. This is an excellent review of past and current opinions on the subject, with each superfamily treated separately. '*Resting posture in the Lepidoptera*', by M.F. TWEEDIE and A.M. EMMET, is a brief account of the various resting postures found in British Lepidoptera. This chapter is accompanied by four colour plates, each with 16 photographs of species in their natural position. Most of these photographs are very good, but they do not always demonstrate the resting posture to the full, for instance that of *Apeira syringaria* (LINN.) and the upturned abdomens of some of the geometrids. The photograph depicting *Cilix glaucata* (SCOP.) was a particularly poor choice as it does not demonstrate the supposed mimicry of a bird dropping and the plant in the background is growing upside-down ! The figure supposedly depicting *Herminia grisealis* ([D. & S.]) is in fact *H. tarsipennalis* (TREIT.). It is a pity that the very characteristic postures of *Caloptilia* and *Argyresthia* species are not figured, although alluded to in the text. *Orthotelia sparganella* (THUNB.) (not '*Orthotaelia*') is compared to *Ypsolopha dentella* (FABR.), as representatives of the Yponomeutidae, whereas the former was placed in the Glyphipterigidae by KYRKI & ITÄMIES (Syst. ent. 11 : 93-105, 1986). In the historical section, A.M. EMMET explains how LINNAEUS classified and named species according to how their wings are held at rest.

Chapter 3 forms the main part of the book (240 pages) and is a '*Chart showing the life history and habits of the British Lepidoptera*', painstakingly compiled by A.M. EMMET. This tremendously useful work gives concise information, mostly in symbol form, of the life history (Jan.-Dec.), status, distribution, habitat, flight time and foodplants for each species on the British List. Additional information, such as red data book categories, is given under

remarks. The key to the symbols is given in the text, but also on a separate laminated card for easy reference. Five indexes to the chart are placed at the end of the book, including one to the authors' names and their abbreviations. The idea is not new of course, but this example is more comprehensive than any previously published life history chart of British Lepidoptera. Obviously mistakes will be found; one could criticise points of nomenclature and systematics and one could discuss for instance the definitions used for the habitat types, but nevertheless the author must be congratulated on the compilation of this list, which contains information that would otherwise only be found by looking through several books, not all of which will be present in the library of the average amateur lepidopterist. It will be continually referred to and should therefore be made available separately, perhaps with laminated cards printed in other languages.

The systematic part follows the same pattern of previous volumes, with descriptions of family, genus and species and keys to imagines for each family. Distribution maps and colour figures are provided for all native species. In contrast to the butterfly volume (7, part 1), the species of doubtful status have not all been illustrated; *Dendrolimus pini* (LINN.) for instance might well be found again in Britain and could have been figured. The four coloured plates are of the same high standard found in the butterfly volume, but I wonder why the legs were drawn in on the first three plates, but not on plate 4!

I understand that this book has now appeared in paperback at a much cheaper price, so that students might also be able to afford it. Thanks to the life history chart, this book can be recommended to all lepidopterists.

STEVEN WHITEBREAD

Butterflies and moths of Yorkshire : Distribution and conservation. S.L. SUTTON & H.E. BEAUMONT (Eds). xi + 367 pp., 40 line illustrations and 5 maps, 21 × 14.8 cm, paperback. Yorkshire Naturalists' Union, c/o Doncaster Museum, Chequer Road, Doncaster DN1 2AE, England, 1989. ISBN 0 9504093 2 4. Price : £ 15 plus postage & packing.

Great Britain has a long tradition of publishing local lists of fauna and flora. The first '*List of Yorkshire Lepidoptera*' was produced by G.T. PORRITT between 1883 and 1886 and published by the Yorkshire Naturalists' Union. Little more than a hundred years on, the same Society has published a new list of butterflies and moths of the old county of Yorkshire, in north-east England.

Yorkshire, with approx. 18,000 km², is about the same size as the state of Rheinland-Pfalz in Germany. The total number of species recorded is 1591, with 50 butterflies, 606 macro moths and 935 microlepidoptera. More information on the study of the Lepidoptera in the county is given in chapter 1 of the book. The geology, geography and climate are described and their influence on the Lepidoptera discussed in chapter 2.

In chapter 3, titled '*Distribution and diversity*', the list of species is analysed and the diversity compared with other counties of northern England. It is encouraging to learn that 128 species of macrolepidoptera are considered to be increasing their range, whereas only 25 seem to be decreasing. No species has become extinct since 1970, whereas 32 additional species have been discovered. The topic of conservation is dealt with in the following chapter. Management recommendations are outlined for all the major habitat types found in the county. The value of data provided by collectors and the necessity to collect voucher specimens is acknowledged. Indeed, in chapter 5, the various types of light traps are described and information on how to identify and rear butterflies and moths is given.

The systematic list gives details of records of each species from each of the 5 vice-counties. For the macrolepidoptera, records are mainly from the period since the last published Yorkshire list of 1968-70. The last microlepidoptera list was published in 1907 and so all known records of these moths are given. The present status of each species is summarised. Very importantly, the source or each record is given. However, it is a pity that only very few county food-plant records are given. Distribution maps are not presented, as the number of available records was considered insufficient, but there are plans to produce 10 × 10 km grid maps in the future. The reviewer hopes, however, that 5 km or even tetrad maps will be produced, as the 10 km maps are produced at the national level and would be insufficiently detailed for a local fauna.

This book has been very well produced. The clearly written text is interspersed with 40 very good line drawings of Yorkshire species. It will be indispensable for all naturalists dealing with the fauna of Yorkshire and it will undoubtedly provide an impetus for further work. It can also be thoroughly recommended to lepidopterists from further afield for comparative purposes and as an excellent example of such a list.

Steven WHITEBREAD

ZOBODAT - www.zobodat.at

Zoologisch-Botanische Datenbank/Zoological-Botanical Database

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