

Book reviews — Buchbesprechungen — Analyses

Larger moths of the London area. Colin W. PLANT. xxii, 292 pp., 523 distribution maps 30.5 × 21.5 cm, hardback. London Natural History Society, 1993. ISBN 0 901009 04 0. Available from : The London Natural History Society, Publication sales secretary, 3 Chatsworth Gardens, West Harrow, Middlesex HA2 0RS, UK. Price : £ 19.95.

This volume can be considered to be the sequel to 'The butterflies of the London area' produced by the same author in 1987. It is however very different in both format and content. The moth volume has a much larger format, there are no coloured photographs and several species are treated per page. It will therefore not be attractive to the general public ; the 'moth hunter' however will find this book extremely interesting and useful.

The London area is defined as that area within 20 miles from St. Paul's Cathedral. All available records have been collated, but on the distribution maps, only the data obtained between 1980 and 1991 are plotted, although the older records are given in the usual way (open circles) for the rarer species. A transparent overlay with maps showing the built-up areas, woodland and chalk is provided. Over this ten year period, 84% of the 856 tetrads (a tetrad = 2 × 2 km) have been covered, although to varying degrees — a remarkable achievement. A total of 715 macrolepidoptera have been recorded from this area, although 66 were not noted during the ten year recording period. The text for each species is very readable, and reminiscent of that in South's 'Moths of the British Isles'. Foodplants known to have been recorded within the area are listed for each species, and also the years of the oldest and most recent records. Appendices give a check list of species for each vice-county in the area, the National Red Data List category, and the number and percentage of tetrads in which each resident species was recorded.

This work will undoubtedly be a very valuable tool for London naturalists, conservation officers and lepidopterists. It provides an ideal basis for further studies and the author and record contributors are to be congratulated on their efforts. Their example should be followed.

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Zoologisch-Botanische Datenbank/Zoological-Botanical Database

Digitale Literatur/Digital Literature

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