

Book reviews ● Buchbesprechungen ● Analyses

MASO, A. & PIJOAN, M.: Observar Mariposas.

17 × 28.5 cm, 319 pp., text in Spanish, hardback. Published by Editorial Planeta S.A., Barcelona, 1997. ISBN 84-08-02072-2. To be ordered from: Editorial Planeta S.A., Córcega Str., 273–279, E-08008 Barcelona, Spain. Price: Pesetas 5.300.

The work entitled “Observing butterflies and moths” begins with a prologue by Dr. Richard S. Peigler, followed by a useful introduction where the authors explain the aim of the book and reveal how it has been structured. It consists of 62 independent subjects, that can be read independently from one another, hence it is not necessary to begin with subject 1 to finish with subject 62. They are included within five thematic chapters as follows.

Chapter 1, “Understanding butterflies and moths”, includes nine subjects. Here the authors introduce the layman into the world of Arthropoda, Insecta and finally Lepidoptera. The species concept, the evolution and origin of the Lepidoptera, their special senses and vision, their wing patterns, colours and wing scales are also considered in this first chapter.

Chapter 2, “The living cycle”, includes nine subjects. In this chapter, the four stages of a lepidopteran life cycle — from egg to adult — are considered as well as some of the special adaptations they show to cope with the different environments they live in. Other aspects dealt with in this chapter are sexual di- or polymorphism, gynandromorphism, seasonal polyphenism and diapause. Chapter 3, “The Lepidoptera and their environment”, includes 12 subjects, all dealing with the ecology s.l. of the Lepidoptera. Subjects as food chains, food resources, predators and parasites, pests, dispersal and conservation of endangered species are dealt with in this chapter.

Chapter 4, “Defense and Behaviour”, includes 16 subjects, all concerned, as the title indicates, with the different defense systems and behavioural patterns shown by the Lepidoptera. Subjects as larval and adult camouflage, aposematic coloration, Müllerian and Batesian mimicry, female and male sex pheromones, flight mechanism and migration are dealt with in this chapter.

Chapter 5, “Lepidoptera and man”, which also includes 16 subjects, deals with aspects related to the long-lasting relationship between man and Lepidoptera. Lives of famous writers and entomologists, from Aristotle to Niko Tinbergen, through Carolus Linnaeus, Alfred Russell Wallace, Charles Darwin, Jean-Henry Fabre, Vladimir Nabokov and Ernst Jünger, are briefly narrated in this wonderful chapter, showing the fascination these colourful and graceful insects arose in all these sensible great men. Other aspects as the presence of the Lepidoptera in all manifestations of the Arts, ancient and modern, as well as in Western, Eastern and Mexican mythology, are considered

here. Two of the subjects of this Chapter are of special interest: one is devoted to the production of silk and the historical Silk Way between China and Europe; another analyzes the importance that the larvae of some Lepidoptera have as a food resource for some people, mostly in Africa and Asia. The book ends with a basic Bibliography, a useful thematic index and the acknowledgements.

It is a very good vulgarizing work dealing with the world of the Lepidoptera, mostly addressed to children and non-lepidopterists, though amateur and professional lepidopterists will also enjoy it. For that reason it was conceived in a very didactic way. It is extensively and superbly illustrated with colour photographs, which help understanding the meaning of what is stated in the text.

The text, though kept as simple as possible, has been written with scientific rigour and, having been checked by specialists on the different subjects dealt with, mistakes are kept to a minimum, which is important for such a work. Some minor ones, though, have slipped into the captions of the photographs, which no doubt is not the authors' fault. For example, on page 151, there are two photographs showing the nymphalid *Erebia pandrose*; the top one shows the butterfly upperside, the bottom one shows its underside. However, the caption states that the top photograph shows the papilionid *Parnassius apollo*. Also on page 153, the bottom photograph is supposed to illustrate a larva of the saturniid moth *Agria tau*, where in fact it is showing a dead caterpillar of a nymphalid butterfly belonging to the genus *Apatura* (*ilia* or *iris*). Also, on page 159, dealing with tropical rainforests, the text makes reference to CITES protected species and quotes the birdwings (genus *Ornithoptera*) as an example. However the butterfly illustrated which accompanies this text is not an *Ornithoptera* representative but *Teinopalpus imperialis*, another papilionid protected by CITES. In this last case it would have been more appropriate to illustrate one *Ornithoptera* species instead of *Teinopalpus* as children and non-lepidopterists might be led to assume the illustrated one is an *Ornithoptera*.

In sum, this book is well conceived and structured, very didactic, superbly illustrated and probably the best vulgarizing work on Lepidoptera published so far in Spain. Translation into other languages would help to fully appreciate its value. The Publisher, Editorial Planeta, should also be congratulated for the high quality reproduction of photographs and text as well as for the editorial work, all contributing to a fine product that will certainly help beginners to discover the fascinating world of butterflies and moths.

VÍCTOR SARTO I MONTEYS

FIBIGER, Michael: Noctuidae Europaeae. Volume 3. Noctuinae III.

22.2 × 29.2 cm, 418 pp., hardback. Published by Entomological Press, Sor, 1997. ISBN 87-89430-05-0. To be ordered from: Apollo Books, Kirkeby Sand

19, DK-5771 Stenstrup, Denmark. Price: DKK 890,- excl. postage (10% discount to subscribers to the whole series, Vol. 1–12).

The present bilingual book (in English and French) is the third — and last, at least for the moment — in a series devoted to the noctuid subfamily Noctuinae, within the more ambitious series Noctuidae Europaeae, which deals with all European Noctuidae. The previous two parts (Fibiger, 1990; 1993) dealt with revisions and analyses of taxonomy (morphology, mainly of the imagines), nomenclature, bionomics (partly) and the distribution of the species and subspecies of European Noctuinae.

This third book deals primarily with the morphology of the male and female genitalia of all the European species of Noctuinae, totalling 262 known species in September 1996. The number of European Noctuinae species has increased considerably since Hartig & Heinicke published their list in 1974 (they listed 186 species). Since the publication of the first two volumes on Noctuinae, five species have been transferred from Noctuinae to Ipimorphinae (Amphipyridae) as follows: *Actinotia polyodon*, *A. radiosa*, *Chloantha hyperici*, *Mesogona acetosellae* and *M. oxalina*. For the sake of consistency between volumes 1, 2 and 3, the genitalia of all five species are described and illustrated in the present volume.

The book is organized as follows: it begins with a preface and acknowledgements, followed by a short introduction where the author, among other matters, explains why photographs instead of drawings have been chosen to illustrate the genitalia. A very useful section is devoted to the technique used for making genitalia preparations (male and female), including how to evert the male vesica from the aedeagus. Follows a very useful taxonomic and nomenclatural summary. The achievements of Fibiger's work are impressive: one lectotype designation for *Euxoa foeda* (Lederer, 1855); two newly described genera, *Basistriga* and *Albocosta*; four newly described species, *Euxoa penelope*, *Euxoa montivaga*, *Yigoga insula* and *Yigoga soror*; five newly described subspecies; nine existing taxa raised to species level and three raised to subspecies level; 76 new synonyms, nomina nuda, revised synonyms; 24 new combinations. Then comes the systematic part. Before getting into the different Noctuinae genera, Fibiger defends the monophyly of the subfamily, quoting ten character states. He also presents very convincing arguments (at least to me) to reject most, if not all, of the new nominal taxa published by Beck (1996). The step taken by Fibiger here is important. One might agree or disagree with the systematic order adopted by a particular author, but in Science solid arguments against or in favour of determined points of view should always be clearly presented so that followers can decide whom to follow. Ego should be left aside, at least when writing a scientific text. As usual, the test of time will always have the last word. There are also some interesting considerations on the species-subspecies dilemma, accompanied by a definition of these terms as used by the author. After that, the proper systematic part begins, dealing with the 43 genera of European Noctuinae plus the genera *Mesogona*, *Actinotia* and *Chloantha* which, as explained

above, have been transferred to the Ipimorphinae. For each genus, there is an introductory section which includes useful diagnostic features along with drawings of (for the genus) generalized male genitalia, male everted vesica and female genitalia. Then comes a classification of the European species-groups and, when applicable, of the subgenera within the genus. Finally, the European species are dealt with one by one, including taxonomic notes when necessary and numerical references to male armature, vesica and female genitalia to be found on the numerous photographic plates; also, comments about the genitalic differences from other closely related species are brought forth if needed.

The photographic plates, which take half the book, show the male genitalia, the aedeagus with everted vesica and the female genitalia of all 262 European species (and some subspecies) of Noctuidae (plus those of the Ipimorphinae *Mesogona oxalina* and *M. acetosellae*, *Actinotia polyodon* and *A. radiosa*, and *Chloantha hyperici*).

The book ends with a Corrigenda to Noctuidae Europaeae, vol. 1 and 2, a specialized Bibliography and a useful Index.

The order brought into the subfamily by M. Fibiger's work was very much needed and no doubt will be appreciated for a long time. As appears unavoidable in such a huge work, some minor mistakes have slipped into it, for example, on page 15 one reads "The aedeagus is transferred to absolute isopropanol and injected from the anterior end (through ductus seminalis) with isopropanol ...". Obviously the injection should take place through the ductus ejaculatorius, not through the ductus seminalis. Also some numerical references given to genitalic preparations in the text do not coincide with their corresponding photographic plates. For example, on page 34, the male armature for *Euxoa lidia* is gen. prep. 2058. However, when going to the corresponding photographic plate, the number does not coincide (it is 11369 instead of the expected 2058).

A comment on the presence of species in "Europe" is as follows. Fibiger states that *Euxoa beatissima* Rebel, 1913, and *Euxoa canariensis* Rebel, 1902, "have never been found in Europe", so they have not been included in his book that deals with European Noctuidae, although other authors, e.g. Beck, include them in their European lists. It is necessary, however, to point out that both species are found on the Canary islands, which politically belong to Spain and thus geopolitically to "Europe". Certainly Fibiger, in the first book of the series, sets his limits of biogeographical "Europe", including the Azores and Madeira but not the Canary islands. In that respect I agree with Fibiger's biogeographical view, but other authors might consider the fauna of the Canary islands as European too, so the sentence quoted above should have been used more carefully.

In sum, this book by the Danish author Michael Fibiger successfully closes the study of one of the most difficult subfamilies within the Noctuidae, the Noctuidae. For the first time ever in Europe, a detailed comparative study of the male and female genitalia of an entire subfamily, including illustrations

of the everted vesica, has been published. This book, together with volume 1 and 2, is a must for researchers working on noctuid moths, a very significant group, both from the point of view of basic phylogenetic studies and of its economic importance, as several species are serious pests of agricultural crops.

VÍCTOR SARTO I MONTEYS

PAMPERIS, Lazaros N.: The Butterflies of Greece.

22 × 29.7 cm, xii + 559 pp., 44 text figures (11 in colour), 8 tables (listed as "plates"), 129 distribution maps, 234 diagrams, 1174 colour photographs, hardback. Published by A. Bastas-D. Plessas Graphic Arts S.A., Athens, September 1997. ISBN 960-7418-20-4. To be ordered from: Bastas-Plessas Publications, Herons Str. 21, GR-104 42 Athens, Greece, Tel.: (00 31)51.35.325-7; fax; 51.39.115; e-mail: basphe@hol.gr. <http://www.hol.gr/business/baspe/>. Price: GRD 30.000, excl. postage.

Greece has one of the richest butterfly faunas in whole Europe, and it appears therefore quite surprising that no comprehensive book dealing with it had been published so far. The title of the present work suggests that this gap is filled at last and, at a first glance, the result seems quite impressive indeed. The numerous beautiful photographs, showing living butterflies in their natural environment, and sometimes the early stages as well, contribute largely to this effect. For this achievement, the author deserves respect. The text, however, is absolutely substandard. Scientific names are published without author's name and year of publication, nowhere printed in italics and, the more, an out-dated nomenclature is used (e.g. "*Agrodiaetus*" *escheri*, *amanda* and *thersites*, "*Plebicula*" *dorylas*, "*Lysandra*" *coridon*, *philippi* and *bellargus*, "*Erebia*" *phegea*). The placing of some taxa is also questionable, e.g. of *Satyrium ledereri* between *Zizeeria karsandra* and *Lampides boeticus*! Some misspellings (e.g. *Hipparchia cristenseni* [recte *christenseni*] on p. 340; *Maniola jurdina* [recte *jurtina*] on pp. 394-395) are quite disturbing, as are some species names used (e.g. *Elphinstonia charlonia* [sic!] instead of *E. penia*: it is the latter species that occurs in Greece, the former one being restricted to Spain, North Africa and parts of the Near East; *Pseudochazara cingovskii* instead of *P. mnischevii*: the former taxon does not occur in Greece, being restricted to the Prilep area in ex-Yugoslav Macedonia, the latter is represented in Greece by subspecies *tisiphone*, a name which is not mentioned anywhere at all). Some identifications appear questionable (e.g. *Pseudochazara amymone* on p. 351 which, the more, is most probably a male and not a female as stated in the text).

The author is clearly a nature lover and without any doubt his intentions are sincere. His hostile attitude towards collecting is, however, unjustifiable and even counterproductive. The author seems to forget that the current knowledge on which he has based his field trips in order to obtain his data, was gathered by a number of entomologists who collected representative samples of each nominal taxon for comparative purpose as well as for

identification (it is, for instance, impossible to distinguish some taxa without examination of some structural characters, i.e. mainly the genitalia as in e.g. the genus *Hipparchia*). The external features illustrated by the author and supposed to help in the identification of “difficult” taxa (e.g. the “brown *Agrodiaetus*” on p. 200, *Hipparchia* on p. 334, *Pseudochazara* on pp. 348–349 and *Pyrgus* and related genera on pp. 440–441) appear of no use. Some taxa have been identified (mainly) following electrophoretic investigations (e.g. *Pontia edusa* (referred to as *daplidice* in the present work), *Maniola chia*), a fact that seems to have escaped the author’s attention. The reviewer would be much interested to know on which evidence the occurrence and distribution of *Agrodiaetus ripartii* in Greece is based (the postulated difference in the white streak on unh *ripartii* and *pelopi* does not appear very convincing, compare illustrations on pp. 201 and 204–205). Karyological studies (for which one does, indeed, have to kill some specimens) would seem much more reliable.

In many instances, the conservation status of nominal taxa is indicated as rare, because of “collectors’ interest”, a highly ludicrous statement for taxa like, for instance, *Pseudochazara amymone*, *Maniola halicarnassus* and *M. megala*, that have probably ever been collected in Greece by only one or two people so far! The reviewer further fails to see how species like *Parnassius mnemosyne*, *Hamearis lucina*, “*Quercusia*” *quercus*, “*Strymonidia*” *w-album* and *pruni*, “*Eumedonia*” *eumedon*, “*Lycaeides*” *argyrognomon* and *Erebia euryale*, to name but a few, would be threatened by collectors’ interest, being widespread at least all over Central Europe.

The photographs of butterflies and biotopes are never accompanied by any precise data as to the locality or even general area of origin, thus undoing any scientific value to these observations. No voucher specimens are at hand to confirm some questionable reports and the reviewer puts question marks to many dots on the distribution maps the author was willing to produce. One single example will illustrate this. On p. 100, a distribution map of “*Nordmannia*” *ilicis* includes the island of Ródos (Rhodes) among the available records. The reviewer has never been able to observe this species on that island, neither did any of his predecessors since lepidopterological explorations started there. It would have been very useful and interesting had Pamperis collected — be it one single — voucher specimen to substantiate this record. Hence on present evidence this record has to be dismissed as unconfirmed. Another case, perhaps the most exciting one dealt with in this book, is that of *Zizeeria karsandra*, which the author reports from “AEG” and “CRE”. This species had previously been mentioned in literature (see OLIVIER, 1993. The butterflies of the Greek island of Ródos (...): 192 and references mentioned therein for a review): it would have been of the greatest value had Pamperis published from where his original data have been gathered (the photographs prove beyond doubt that these specimens are indeed *Z. karsandra* and that the butterfly thus is a true resident of the Greek butterfly fauna). “Collectors’ interest” cannot be accounted for as a potential threat, as virtually nobody

ever observed this butterfly on any Greek island so far. On the contrary, habitat destruction could very conceivably cause its extinction in this country, if the butterfly appears to live in only one or a few localities. Without any more precise data it appears simply impossible to start any conservation programme on this issue!

The real threats to the butterfly fauna of Greece (habitat destruction, overgrazing by goats and sheep, large-scale burning of forest and maquis, destruction of natural coastal and lowland habitats for the building of touristic accomodation, ...) are given only marginal attention. The "collector", who appears by the way to be the only really competent specialist to judge on matters of taxonomy, distribution, ecology and, ultimately, conservation, is accused of being the main cause of decline of butterflies (which, for the time being, appears fortunately enough to be minor in comparison to what is currently happening in the industrialised countries of northwestern Europe). Such an attitude could lend support to politicians and governmental (including so-called "conservationist") bodies to instore a law imposing a total ban on collecting, as is already the case in Germany and Spain, two countries where, ironically (is this coincidence?), there is a flourishing trade in butterflies!

The author missed a unique opportunity to achieve a real great work, in not having consulted a qualified team of "collectors" [recte entomologists], who could have reviewed the manuscript thoroughly before it went to press. Many erroneous, unpleasant and largely unjustified statements could thus have been prevented from appearing into the public domain.

To sum up in short, the butterfly illustrated on the cover page symbolizes very well the content of this book: the specimen is a male *Lycaena candens*. The author, however, refers to it as "*Palaeochrysophanus*" *hippothoe*, a species that does not even occur in Greece, having its southern distribution limit on the Balkans in Bosnia. The most obvious difference between both species resides in the male genitalia (UV reflectance photography is an additional aid). Had nobody ever dissected any specimen, we would still be ignorant of the very fact that these are two species. To conclude, the reviewer regrets to have to express his own opinion that it would have been better if this book had never been written, at least in its present form.

Alain OLIVIER

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Artikel/Article: [Book reviews • Buchbesprechungen • Analyses 74-80](#)