

## Book Review

**Hodges, R. W. 1999. Gelechioidea, Gelechiidae (part), Gelechiinae (Part-*Chionodes*). - In: Dominick, R.B. et al., *The Moths of America North of Mexico, fascicle 7.6*. - The Wedge Entomological Research Foundation, Washington. - 21.3 x 28.1 cm, 339 pp., 49 black & white and 5 colour plates, paperback. - ISBN 0-933003-10-2.**

The 23<sup>rd</sup> publication in the prestigious series *The Moths of America North of Mexico* is the second part of Fascicle 7 that treats the Gelechiidae. This volume is entirely devoted to the gelechiid genus *Chionodes* Hübner and is the result of more than 30 years study of the North American fauna by the author. The diversity of this genus in northern America is enormous. A total of 187 species are recognized of which no fewer than 115 are new to science! For comparison, Karsholt and Razowski in their European catalogue mention only 28 taxa for Europe.

The book starts with a general introduction to the genus *Chionodes* in America north of Mexico. Collecting methods, diagnosis and classification are briefly discussed. The section on classification ends with a description of the six species groups in which the genus is subdivided. Line drawings of the typical male and female genitalia of each group and a key to group level complete this section.

The main body of the book consists of dichotomous keys to species level for each group followed by the species descriptions. The keys deserve special attention since they contain information not always present in the species description themselves. Despite an extensive text the keys are easy to use and essential for correct identification.

Each species is thoroughly described. Scientific name and list of synonyms are given with reference to the original publication. Type material of new species and their depositories are listed in full. For previously described taxa summaries are given (complete data of all material used for this study is available via internet). Short statements on ecology and distribution and a reference to similar species complete the description.

The book ends with a series of plates. On 49 black and white plates photographs of nearly all male and female genitalia of the species described are given. The photographs are of variable quality and despite the 49(!) plates in general too small to be used for direct identification. At this point one cannot but admire the keys to the species provided earlier in the book. Genitalia are most easily identified by switching between keys and illustrations. All species are figured on 5 colour plates. Though most species are well recognized, at up to two times the natural size, the moths are rather small and the plates appear too crowded. Having added one or two more plates would have allowed for fewer specimens per plate, a greater magnification, thus making details better visible, and it also would have avoided that species at the edge of the plates often have part of their wing cut off. It is also to be regretted that most pale specimens, through lack of contrast, nearly merge with the background. Studies on (North) American Lepidoptera rarely get much response from European lepidopterologists yet books like these surely deserve their attention. Not only is the book well written, its content is also of importance for those studying European Gelechiidae. At least four of the species treated here: *G. continuella*, *G. lugubrella*, *G. praeclarella* and *G. viduella* also occur in Europe. It cannot be excluded that as research progresses, the list may become longer still. One must also realize that the great diversity of the genus in Northern America may shed light on the situation elsewhere.

Summing up this book not only is absolutely indispensable to anyone with an interest in north American Gelechiidae, but is also highly recommended for anyone with an interest in (European) Gelechiidae.

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