

Book Review

Gozmány, L. 2000: Holcopogonidae. [German] – In: Gaedike, R. (ed.), *Microlepidoptera Palaearctica* **10**: 8–174, 162 figs. – Goecke & Evers, Keltern. – ISBN: 3-931374-20-3. Price: DM 100,00.

In the recent volume of the *MP* series, László Gozmány revises a rather small and unknown group of the superfamily Gelechioidea: the Holcopogonidae. This family comprises 34 species from the south-western Palaearctic Region, mainly in the Mediterranean, and one species in Mongolian deserts. Elsewhere, only three holcopogonid species occur in South Africa and one species in India and Sri Lanka. The small moths possess characteristic ciliated antennae and porrect labial palpi whose third segment characteristically forms an erect/upright needle. The most peculiar feature of this family is coprophagy, i.e. the larvae feed on excrements of herbivorous mammals. Thus, the larvae play an important role as dung decomposers in southern and eastern Mediterranean deserts and semideserts. *Oecia oecophila* is also known to feed on human excrements, which probably allowed this species to extend its range to Japan, the USA and even to Brazil. However, for most of the species there is no information available about their life habits and ecology, and even the range of each species is still poorly known. Future research on this group may result in interesting discoveries about the ecology of these moths as well as in the discovery of further new species. Gozmány provides for this purpose a fundamental monograph of the Holcopogonidae. His book begins with a general diagnosis of the family, including the history of its systematic treatment. For each species, the external morphology of the moths and the genitalia of both sexes (so far known) are described, the geographical distribution and a complete list of references is given. Drawings of the genitalia and colour figures of the moths conclude the work. All together, Gozmány established eleven new species, one new genus, one new synonym as well as six new combinations.

The 10th volume of the *Microlepidoptera Palaearctica* is dedicated to Hans Georg Amsel who originally founded the series together with Hans Reisser and František Gregor. It was Amsel's idea that a progress in scientific research on Microlepidoptera is possible only through the publication of comprehensive revisions to summarise the entire knowledge of morphology, ecology, zoogeography and systematics together with high quality figures of the moths and their genitalia. The first volume of this remarkable project was published in 1965 by Stanislaw Bleszynski about the Crambidae (now Crambinae: Pyraloidea, Crambidae). However, the size of each volume had two disadvantages. First, a single volume became more and more expensive, e.g. the ninth volume already costs DM 800,00. Second, such monographs can be completed just after a fairly long time. It is less promoting to the science of Microlepidopterology, if such books are published on average only every third and a half year. With the 10th volume, this concept has changed. The former double volume, one book for the text and one for the figures, is now amalgamated into one book with shorter but more poignant descriptions.

I hope that the new, economical brand of the *Microlepidoptera Palaearctica* which allows a moderate price for one volume will encourage more lepidopterists to study smaller moths. For this, I wish the new editor, Reinhard Gaedike, and the new publisher, Erich Bauer, much success for the continuation of the series.

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ZOBODAT - www.zobodat.at

Zoologisch-Botanische Datenbank/Zoological-Botanical Database

Digitale Literatur/Digital Literature

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