

### Book review

**Christodoulos Makris 2003: Butterflies of Cyprus.** – Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation, 329 pp. – Hardback (ISBN 9963-42-815-0) 29.50£ / 42.85 €; paperback (ISBN 9963-42-817-7) 25.95£ / 37.95 € (final price may vary due to postage, taxes, and handling costs).

Butterflies are by far the most popular insects among the order Lepidoptera. New regional butterfly books continue to be published even in regions like Europe where one might believe the fauna to be exhaustively covered. The present volume, nevertheless, is a very nice and beautifully produced addition. It is more a 'coffee-table book' rather than a scientific monograph. But for the first time all butterfly species known from the Mediterranean island of Cyprus have been illustrated in full colour, together with useful information on their distribution and ecology. The book is directed to the general nature lover rather than the butterfly specialist, and the text is written accordingly. The first chapters provide brief, non-technical introductions into the vegetation and climate of Cyprus, the morphology and life-cycles of butterflies, important behaviours, and natural enemies. The major part of the book is devoted to the 53 butterfly species known to occur on Cyprus, either as residents or (rare) immigrants. Each species is covered by a text of one printed page, accompanied by an impressive number of highest quality colour photographs of life butterflies and their early stages (usually three pages per species). For each species the recorded distribution on Cyprus is indicated on a grid map. The text gives important data on phenology and distribution. Larval host plants and major adult nectar sources are also listed, many of which for the first time. A brief synoptic chapter summarizes the butterfly fauna of Cyprus under the perspectives of biodiversity, biogeography, ecology, and conservation. To facilitate identifications, a second section of good quality plates depicts set specimens of all species in dorsal and ventral view, with appropriate consideration of sexual and seasonal polyphenism. Two indexes and a brief (one page) bibliography conclude the book. Overall, there is little to be critical with that book. The bibliography should probably have been a bit more comprehensive, but given the aim of the volume this is of rather marginal significance. The quality of the figures is near perfect, and the ecological and distributional information makes this a very valuable addition to the butterfly literature also for the advanced lepidopterist. The price of the book is adequate given the fine quality of printing and the lush illustrations. I confidently recommend this book to anyone interested in Mediterranean butterflies, and I wish this book wide distribution also among local authorities, naturalists and conservationists. Cyprus still has a remarkable, even though not too extensive butterfly fauna, and this book certainly has much potential in contributing to the preservation of this natural heritage.

KONRAD FIEDLER