

On the status of “Mariposas de la Peninsula Iberica”

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I – The recent past and the present

It was only in April 1973 that the Spanish “National Institute for the Conservation of Nature (ICONA)”, an autonomous state-run centre mainly involved with the protection of forestry, under the control of the Agriculture Department, accepted the task of publishing what it had been patiently awaiting as a draft for several years : the first book ever prepared by Spanish lepidopterists on their Butterfly fauna, covering systematically both biology and distribution of species. As a result, a two-volume edition with hundreds of colour photographs titled “Mariposas de la Península Ibérica” started distribution in the spring of 1974. During the five-years waiting period, the authors (Gómez-Bustillo & Fernández-Rubio) had witnessed Higgins & Riley (1970) and Manley & Allcard (1970) field guides to have an enthusiastic reception in Spain and Portugal, while their efforts with leading private Spanish publishing firms (more than fifteen contacted) proved to be unsuccessful. The two luxury volumes were at last ready and the 5,000 copies printed kept on selling briskly, with less than 1,000 copies presently in stock, a record in Spain for a book of the price and specialized subjects as this was. A very important group of reviewers gave a warm welcome to this first Spanish effort for a book in line with international standards.

It was then contemplated by the authors to try to continue the series with the same title, “Mariposas de la Península Ibérica”, taking advantage of the fact that in the Spanish language “Mariposa” means both butterfly and moth, only to be differentiated by adding “diurna” (day-flying) or “nocturna” (night-flying). As a result, Vol. III (*Cossoidea*, *Zygaenoidea*, *Noctuoidea partim*, *Bombycoidea* and *Sphingoidea*) was published in 1976. This edition, reduced by ICONA due to rising costs to 3,000 copies, is almost out of print, thanks to the reviewers who again gave their warmest approval to this new volume.

Volume IV (1979), the second of the Heterocera division, was the job of Gómez-Bustillo alone, with the help of his own photographic staff

and of a dozen amateur photographers, who put all their skill and inspiration into figuring the prime examples of natural life included in the book. The families of Noctuoidea selected were of real interest due to their economic importance as forestry pests : *Notodontidae*, *Thaumetopoeidae*, *Dilobidae*, *Lymantriidae*, *Arctiidae*, *Hypsidae*, *Endrosidae* and *Nolidae*. Published, also by ICONA : 3,000 copies, with two-thirds sold during 1980.

II – The immediate future

For the last four years the writer has been planning the enlargement and consolidation of “Mariposas de la Península Ibérica”, at least to cover what is commonly known as Macrolepidoptera. Thus, with the help of a small team of close specialist-collaborators, the publication of volumes V and VI (Noctuidae), in co-authorship with M. Arroyo Varela et al., and of Volume VII (Geometroidea) in co-authorship with A. Expósito Hermosa, is being carefully prepared with the photographic work well advanced. Volume VIII is being drafted by Gómez-Bustillo, but the task, mainly the recollection of data and specimens for taxonomical and/or photographic work, is proving to be more and more difficult each day. Besides, the writing of individual biological cards for each species was becoming a real struggle for a single author, despite the encouragement of both ICONA and a similar state-run organization, namely the Institute for Agricultural Research (INIA), toward the continuation of the series. As a consequence, between September and November of 1980, an agreement has been reached between the writer and two distinguished Microlepidoptera specialists, E. Traugott-Olsen, a Danish subject living in Spain for several years, who will also be the artist in charge of the colour drawing of taxa, and A. Vives Moreno, both active members of SHILAP, for the reactivation and enlargement of the series “Mariposas de la Península Ibérica”. With this boost to scientific and artistic capabilities, it is proposed to conclude the series with the following schedule of volumes, several of which are in an advanced stage of preparation :

- Vol. V and VI. Noctuoidea, partim (*Noctuidae*), by Gómez Bustillo-Arroyo Varela et al.
- Vol. VII. Geometroidea (*Drepanidae*, *Axiidae* ; *Geometridae* and *Thyatiridae*), by Gómez Bustillo & Expósito Hermosa.
- Vol. VIII. Hepialoidea (*Hepialidae*), Tineoidea, partim (*Psychidae*, *sensu stricto*), Sesiioidea *sensu* Heppner (*Brachodidae* ; *Sesiidae*, and *Choreutidae*), and Zygaenoidea, partim (*Heterogynidae*), by Gómez Bustillo-Traugott Olsen-Vives Moreno.

– Vol. IX. Micropterigoidea (*Micropterigidae*), Eriocranioidea (*Eriocraniidae*), Nepticuloidea (*Opostegidae* ; *Nepticulidae*, and *Tischeriidae*), Incurvarioidea (*Incurvariidae* ; *Cryopterigidae* ; *Adelidae* ; and *Heliozelidae*), and Tineoidea, partim (*Tineidae* ; *Eriocottidae* ; *Micropsychiniidae* ; *Ochsenheimeriidae* ; *Lyonetiidae* ; *Gracillariidae*, and *Phyllocnistidae*), by Gómez Bustillo-Traugott Olsen-Vives Moreno.

– Vol. X. Gelechioidea, partim (*Oecophoridae* ; *Ethmiidae*, *Stathmopodidae* ; *Elachistidae* ; *Pterolonchiidae* ; *Coleophoridae* ; *Blastobasidae*, and *Symmocidae*), by Gómez Bustillo-Traugott Olsen-Vives Moreno.

– Vol. XI. Gelechioidea, partim (*Holcopogonidae* ; *Momphidae* ; *Cosmopterigidae*, incl. *Chrysopeleiniinae* ; *Scythridae* ; *Gelechiidae*, incl. *Dichomerinae*, and *Lecithoceridae*), by Gómez Bustillo-Traugott Olsen-Vives Moreno.

– Vol. XII. Copromorphoidea (*Carposidae* ; *Epermeniidae*, and *Glyphipterigidae*, sensu stricto), and Yponomeutoidea, sensu Heppner (*Douglasiiidae*, *Argyresthiidae*, *Yponomeutidae*, *Plutellidae*, *Acrolepiidae*, and *Heliodinidae*), by Gómez Bustillo-Traugott Olsen-Vives Moreno.

– Vol. XIII. Tortricoidea (*Tortricidae* and *Cochylidae*), by Gómez Bustillo-Traugott Olsen-Vives Moreno.

– Vol. XIV. Pyraloidea (*Alucitidae* ; *Acentropidae* ; *Pyralidae* ; *Galleriidae* ; *Phycitidae*, *Pyraustidae*, and *Crambidae*), and Pterophoroidea (*Pterophoridae*), by Gómez Bustillo-Traugott Olsen-Vives Moreno.

III – Conclusions

In brief ... The challenge is to have ten volumes prepared between 1980 and 1995, either by the above-mentioned team of authors or by their successors. Of course, the order of the Microlepidoptera families within the six volumes is not definite, being strongly dependent on the results of research conducted within the next years by the leading world authorities on the subject who are, as every lepidopterist knows, involved in the current publications : “Microlepidoptera Palaearctica”, “The Moths of America North of Mexico” and “The Moths & Butterflies of Great Britain and Ireland”. However to line up the systematic structure to be followed by the authors, a Systematic Catalogue of the Iberian Lepidoptera is being published by the above-mentioned INIA, the First Part (Macrolepidoptera, including 39 families) planned to be from the press during the spring

of 1981 (by Gómez-Bustillo & Arroyo Varela), with the Second Part (Microlepidoptera, including 51 families) to be distributed between 1981 and 1982 (by Gómez-Bustillo, Arroyo Varela et al.).

Taking advantage of the fact that "Nota Lepidopterologica" is an international medium, the author wishes to acknowledge with deep gratitude, in his own name and on behalf of the others who have co-authored "Mariposas de la Península Ibérica", all the help received over the last ten years, which the new team will undoubtedly continue to receive, from the following European and American colleagues :

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As far as the Spanish lepidopterists are concerned and as has been regularly disclosed in the four volumes of "Mariposas de la Península Ibérica" already published, nobody has denied his cooperation in accordance with his capacities, with one single exception. This situation explains and justifies the increasing dependence of the author on specimens and reliable data existing in other European private and public collections, originating from the Iberian Peninsula.

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