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BOOK REVIEW

D'Abrera, B., 1987. *Sphingidae Mundi*. E.W. Classey Ltd., Faringdon, Oxon., U.K. ix + 226 pages, incl. Appendix, generic index, species index. 97.50 pounds sterling (inclusive) (approximately CAN \$220.00).

This latest contribution from Mr. D'Abrera is a significant piece of work for those of us with a love of the Sphingidae. This is not a revision of the family; it is designed to enable the reader to identify hawk moths by comparison with the figures. There are no keys or illustrations of genitalia.

The family is covered very well in this book. The author estimates the family contains 1050 species in approximately 200 genera; of these, only three genera and 124 species are not illustrated here (diagnoses are provided for six of these species). From this standpoint, this is the most complete work available on the Sphingidae.

The quality of the figures for which the author is responsible is excellent; leafing through the plates is a delight in itself! Species are illustrated life size, the figures are clear, and colours are accurately represented. Described subspecies are listed in the text, and although most are not illustrated, a brief diagnosis is usually provided. An attempt has been made to show the known variation of some species, and the dorsal and ventral surfaces of many species are illustrated. A general distribution and some biological notes are provided. The author has included figures of some species he has not seen in an Appendix; the quality of these figures varies, but most are adequate.

Several taxonomic changes have been proposed: four names are proposed as new synonyms; four names are resurrected from synonymy; one new subspecies is described; one new name is proposed; and one lectotype is designated.

My only major complaint with this book is that, for the price, it is not particularly well organized. The arrangement of figures on the plates may look nice in a collection, but doing this in a book leaves a great deal of unused space. Considering the bulk of the cost of production must be from producing the plates, leaving unused space only increases the number of plates, and thus increases the cost of the book. The quality of the figures and the ability of the reader to identify the species is not affected by the number or arrangement of specimens on the plate. Since the author bore the entire cost of production himself, I am surprised a more economical format was not adopted. Also, for several reasons, I can not see that anything has been gained by including some figures in an Appendix; the author has not consistently placed all figures for which he is not responsible into the Appendix (see photographs of *Philodia astyanor* Boisduval, page 128, and *Temnora kala* Darge, page 148, and the painting of *Barbourion lemaiti* (Le Moulton), page 89); the author appears to have forgotten which species are in the Appendix (see below); and the species illustrated in the Appendix are well separated from section of text relevant to them. With better organization of the plates, the species figured in the Appendix could easily have been incorporated into the existing plates, thus reducing the number of plates required (and the cost of the book).

In addition to the organization of the plates, I found it difficult to cross reference the plates with the text. Finding the section of text relevant to a given species required scanning for a specific name on one to three pages. Numbering the plates and adding a number to the species name of each plate (with a corresponding number in the text) would make it much easier to associate text and plates.

Finally, I noted that the format used for presenting data about the distribution and number of species in each genus was changed on page 86 for no apparent reason. This is a minor point, but I prefer the text to be consistent throughout.

The book has several other small defects. First, the checklist of genera has not been consistently followed in the text. *Neococytius* Hodges, *Ampeloeca* R. & J. and *Sphingidites* Kernbach are listed in the checklist, but do not appear in the text. (*Ampeloeca* is treated as a synonym of *Darapsa* Walker; *Sphingidites* is a fossil.) *Chlaenogramma* Smith and *Isogramma* R. & J. (= *Autogramma* Jordan) from the checklist are listed in the text as synonyms of *Manduca* Hübner and *Ceratonia* Harris respectively. *Cressonia* Grote & Robinson is used in the checklist and on the plate, but *Amorpha* Hübner (the correct name) is used in the text. *Compsogene* R. & J. from the checklist is equivalent to *Amblypterus* Hübner in the text; the latter does not appear in the checklist and should be spelled *Amplypterus* (it is the correct name for this genus). On other matters in the checklist, *Neoclanis* Carcasson is listed twice, and the author of *Adhemarius* is cited as "Hübner" in the checklist and "Oiticica" in the text.

Second, there are many typographical errors in the text, and although most are minor, few pages of text have no such errors. The plates are much better in this regard, but several spelling errors were noted.

Third, several oversights were noted. The text indicates the following species are illustrated in the Appendix, but figures were not found in the copy before me: *Protaleuron rhodogaster* R. & J., *Cephonodes banksi* Clark, *Cephonodes novebudensis* Clark, *Macroglossum buruensis* Holland, *Macroglossum albolineata* Clark, *Macroglossum bruini* Clark, *Macroglossum haslami* Clark, *Macroglossum moecki* Rüttimeyer, and *Macroglossum stevensi* Clark. The following species are figured in the Appendix, but this is not mentioned in the text: *Oxyambulyx immaculata* Clark, *Platysphinx bituberculatus* Darge, *Polyptychus ferroseus* Gehlen, *Baniwa yavitensis* Lichy, *Xylophanes haxairei* Cadiou and *Theretra tessmanni* Gehlen. Three species are figured on the plates which are not mentioned in the text: "*P. boisduvali*" (p. 67), "*H. saundersi*" (p. 115) and "*Platysphinx dorsti*" (Appendix). *Polyptychoides grayi assimilis* R. & J. is figured on page 69; this is not mentioned in the text (p. 74), and the character in the wing maculation cited as diagnostic for this subspecies does not agree with the figure. *Leucostrophus hirundo* (Gerstaecker) is renamed *L. alterhirundo* by the author (p. 168), but *L. hirundo* is used on the plate. *Panacra cingulata* Clark from the text (p. 136) has apparently been called *P. angulata* on the plate. The figure captions for *Daphnis dohertyi* Rothschild (p. 127) and *Maasenia heydeni* (Saalmüller) (p. 139) indicate that more than one subspecies has been described for these species, but none are listed in the text. *Adhemarius gannascus dentoni* Clark from the text (p. 49) is treated as a full species on the plate (the author believes this subspecies is a separate species). In the text, *Hemeroplanes gracilis* Jordan (p. 100) also appears in the combination *Callionima gracilis* Jordan (p. 102). Finally, "Butler, 1877" is cited as the author of *Sphinx perelegans* Hy. Edwards (p. 40).

I also object very strenuously to the author's treatment of "*Cocytius cluentius* Cramer, 1775 stat. rev." (p. 22). Since this is the type species of *Neococytius* Hodges, what the author has done, in effect, is synonymize *Neococytius* and *Cocytius*. However, he has done this without even citing the name *Neococytius* in the text, and the discussion of characters upon which this decision was based is entirely inadequate to allow the reader to make an informed decision about the validity of *Neococytius*. His arbitrary action is scientifically unacceptable and is likely to cause confusion in the mind of the average reader. Personally, I do not think this synonymy should be accepted until D'Abbrera has provided a much more detailed explanation

for this proposed change.

In spite of these criticisms, this book is an important synopsis of the Sphingidae of the world, and will be indispensable to those of us who collect hawk moths. Unfortunately, the hefty price tag may discourage many people from buying this book.

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BOOK NOTICE

COX, J. M. 1987. Pseudococcidae (Insecta: Hemiptera). Fauna of New Zealand [number] 11, 230 pages. Science Information Publishing Centre, DSIR, P. O. Box 9741, Wellington, New Zealand (US\$ 29.82).

The 116 species of Pseudococcidae (67 newly recorded and 61 new to science) known to occur in New Zealand are treated in about 100 pages of text, complemented with 119 pages of excellent illustrations, showing both habitus and detailed structural features of many species. Only females are keyed and described, since males are known for very few species. Known host plant records are listed for each mealy bug species in the text, and the mealy bugs recorded for each known host plant are listed in an appendix.

This volume is another excellent contribution to the entomological literature, meeting in all respects the high standards required by the Editorial Advisory Group and the Series Editor of the "Fauna of New Zealand".

G. E. Ball