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## QUAESTIONES ENTOMOLOGICAE

A periodical record of entomological investigations, published at  
the Department of Entomology, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta.

Volume 2

Number 1

3 January 1966

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### Book Reviews

DAVIS, H.S., Editor. MEILLON, BOTHA DE, HARRINGTON, J. S.  
and KALK, MARGARET, Associate Editors. 1964. Ecological Studies  
in Southern Africa. Monographiae Biologicae. Vol. XIV. Dr. W. Junk.  
The Hague. xxiv + 415 pp. 23 plates. 47 figs. Cloth bound. Price -  
60 Guilders (\$18.00 Canadian).

This volume is intended as a companion volume to Biogeography  
and Ecology in Australia, vol. VIII in the same series\*. It contains 28  
papers on ecological studies in southern Africa of which eight deal directly  
or indirectly with insects. The general intention is to make available to  
workers outside southern Africa a summary of ecological work being  
carried out there and in this it succeeds. However it does not cover all  
aspects of the ecology of southern Africa and so is not as useful as its  
companion volume on Australia.

Most of the papers are general in scope and some of them are  
rather superficial. Papers of especial interest are that by Cooke on the  
Pleistocene environment in southern Africa, two papers by Vesey-  
Fitzgerald and A. Leu on locusts and a paper by Brynard on the effects  
of veld burning on the vegetation and game in the Kruger National Park,  
the first scientific study I have seen of this very controversial subject.  
The paper by Alcock on the advance of the deserts is also of considerable  
interest.

An introductory chapter integrates the papers and gets them into  
the perspective of other research in southern Africa. Useful bibliog-  
raphies accompany each paper.

The book is printed on high quality paper and has an attractive  
and durable dust cover. The quality of the illustrations is good and that  
of the photographic plates is excellent.

This book should be referred to by all persons interested in African  
ecology but cannot be considered worth its extremely high cost.

SMIT, BERNARD. 1964. Insects in Southern Africa : How to control them. Oxford University Press. Cape Town. South Africa, xiv + 399 pp. Price - Rand \$4.95 (\$8.75 Canadian).

This is a small volume written for "Students, Health Officers, Gardeners and Farmers" rather than Entomologists, by one of South Africa's most respected entomologists. The work integrates and summarizes all that is known about insect pests and their control in South Africa in a manner that can be readily understood by laymen. It is written in a friendly, breezy style laced with anecdotes from the experiences of the author and others. Technical terms are kept to a minimum and those that are necessary are explained in the text obviating the need for a glossary.

Although the book is mainly concerned with pests, beneficial insects, especially those used in biological control, receive a fair share of the space and conspicuous insects of little economic importance such as mayflies and dragonflies are not excluded.

The sections on control are refreshing at the present time, when most books on this topic tend to stress chemical controls to the exclusion of all others. One frequently finds advice against spraying when natural enemies are present and considerable weight is given to cultural controls such as proper rotational grazing and the proper timing of agricultural practices.

The older Pre World War II insecticides are also recommended when the author believes they are still adequate or superior to the newer ones.

Persons with no background in entomology may find the taxonomic arrangement of the book confusing and it may prove difficult for an untrained person to run down the source of his trouble from it. This is to some extent offset by a visual index in which figures of all major groups of insects and terrestrial arthropods are indexed to the appropriate text, but remains a major fault.

In many ways this work is a model of extension writing and although it refers exclusively to southern Africa should be read by all persons connected with entomological extension work.

Peter Graham