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Book Review

LINDNER, E. 1973. *Alpenfliegen*. Goecke & Evers, Krefeld. 204 pp., 135 figures (including one colour plate). Size 16 x 24 cm., hard covers. Price: 66 DM (about \$27 Canadian at May 1973 exchange rates, after addition of postage, packing and bank charges).

Professor Dr. Erwin Lindner has become a father figure to modern Dipterists. Back in the 'twenties he founded the well-known series "Die Fliegen der paläarktischen Region", of which he is still the editor. Now long past normal retirement age, he works on at the Staatliches Museum für Naturkunde in Stuttgart, where he holds the rank of Chief Curator (Hauptkonservator i.R.). His new book on alpine flies is the result of over half a century of field work.

As readers of this book Lindner has in mind mainly the many naturalists who visit the Alps. The longest part of the book consists of description and discussion of about 100 selected species. The descriptions are detailed, of a standard appropriate to taxonomic works. The families treated in most detail are the Blepharoceridae (on the basis mainly of Mannheim's work), Tipulidae, Stratiomyidae, Rhagionidae, Acroceridae, Asilidae, Empididae, Syrphidae, Psilidae, Satophagidae, Muscidae, Anthomyiidae and Tachinidae. Canadian students of these families will find Lindner's book helpful, as some of the species treated are holarctic and most have close relatives here. The introductory sections to the book include some entitled "The history of investigation of alpine Diptera", "Biocenoses in the Alps", "Diagnostic characters of nival Diptera", "Boreoalpine glacial relics", "Biological altitude-zones in the Alps" and "Massifs de refuge".

The book is well illustrated, mostly with line and wash drawings but including also a colour plate of the Muscid *Mesembrina mystacea* (L.). Some of the drawings are original, others copies (mostly from "Die Fliegen der paläarktischen Region" and a dissertation on Blepharoceridae by B. J. Mannheim). I noted only one printing error of consequence ("*Gymnocera*" for "*Gymnomera*" in the caption to Fig. 78).

The book has certain limitations. The author has been highly selective in what he has treated, presumably to contain the size and price of the book. I would have liked to see included more information on high altitude Chironomidae and a summary of Groschke's work on alpine Agromyzidae. It would also have been useful if lists of references had been given under each family, for the benefit of readers who wish to pursue their interests further. However, such omissions do not detract from the fact that the information presented is reliable and interesting. I can sincerely recommend the book to all who wish to afford it. It is a pity the price is so high as a result of recent changes in exchange rates.

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