

REVIEWS

BUTTERFLIES OF RHODESIA. By E. C. G. Phinhey. Published by the Rhodesia Scientific Association and printed at the Herald Office, Salisbury. IV + 208 pp., 13 text-figures, and 21 plates, 13 colored. April, 1949.

Through the courtesy of Captain R. H. R. STEVENSON of Selukwe, South Rhodesia, the reviewer received a copy of this attractive and informative book.

In a foreword, Sir JOHN KENNEDY, K. B. E., C. B., Governor of South Rhodesia, lists some of the previous works on the African Butterflies and outlines some features of the present work. The introductory chapter deals briefly with elementary matters regarding butterflies' external structures, something on senses, plan of the life cycle, variation, protective coloration and migration. This is followed by directions for collecting and preserving butterflies, how to make wing-scale transfers to paper, breeding, and a final section on "Man and the Insect World." This latter might have been appended to suggest that a study of butterflies could have a relationship to insects of economic interest.

A third chapter deals with information on butterfly taxonomy with special reference to the Rhodesian species treated in the book. The first sentence deplors the fact that the majority of species considered are not well-known by common names, but this deficiency is remedied in the text where we find the English touch in designations like the Pied Zulu, Woolly Legs, Red Playboy, Erikson's Highflyer, Bush Scarlet, Black Heart, White Pie, Grass Jewel, Two Pip Policeman, Garden Inspector, Air Commodore, Pirate, and the Common Joker, to name a few.

A key to families includes characteristics of adults, larvae, and pupae. The major portion of the book, 117 pages, is devoted to a systematic treatment of the species, each of which is discussed as to description of adult, pupa, and habits and distribution.

One of the most useful charts included is entitled "Time Table for the Species Described" which lists the Latin name of each species, common name, food of larva, seasonal occurrence (early or late Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter), and locality and abundance. It might be noted that in South Rhodesia, Spring is from September to November, Summer is from December to February, Autumn extends from March to May, and Winter is from June to August. Seven and a half pages are devoted to foodplants of caterpillars with Latin and common names, plant family, and larvae which feed upon these. This is followed by a checklist of the more than 400 species of butterflies in the region. Glossary, Author's Names, References, a short list of dealers in entomological supplies, and Index to Butterflies completes the book.

The color plates are for the most part beautifully executed and are made from paintings by the author. Altogether, about one-third of the known butterflies of the area are illustrated either in color or in gravure.

Many people who still regard the Dark Continent as swarming with wild beasts, and who shudder at the supposed hair-raising adventures of artillery-equipped expeditions will be quite astonished to discover through this book that the butterflies of Rhodesia are better known than they are over large parts of North America.

The book is highly recommended to anyone interested in the butterflies of Africa.

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