

REVIEWS

BRITISH PYRALID AND PLUME MOTHS. By Bryan P. Beirne. 208 pp. 16 col. pls., 189 figs. London, 15 Sept. 1952. Publisher: Frederick Warne & Co., Ltd., London, and 79 Madison Ave., New York, N. Y. Price \$5.00.

The British Pyralidoidea include 174 species of Pyralidae, 35 Pterophoridae, and 1 Orneodidae (no longer considered a pyralidoid by contemporary workers). Dr. Beirne has given keys to the families, subfamilies, genera, and species. For many species there are further comments on color in the text. The habits and habitats, British distribution, and seasonal characteristics are described in some detail. It is remarkable that something is known of the life-history of all 36 of the plume-moths and of 143 of the 161 regularly occurring British pyralids. Where possible, descriptions of all stages are included, with foodplant notes.

The identifying characters used in the keys are clearly illustrated with line drawings and defined in the glossary. Genitalia are not usually figured, because these have been recently illustrated for both sexes (Pierce & Metcalf, *The genitalia of the pyrales, deltoids, and plumes*; 1938); similarly the larvae are not figured, since colored figures of most larvae were given by Buckler (*Larvae of British butterflies and moths*; 1899). The colored plates of the Beirne book show nearly every established British species, but most of them leave much to be desired in the reproduction.

This new addition to Warne's fine "Wayside and Woodland Series" should be an essential reference volume for any European lepidopterist interested in the pyralidoids and of special value for the non-European fauna for comparisons.

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BUTTERFLY FARMER. By L. Hugh Newman. 208 pp., 67 plates and frontpiece. Publisher: Phoenix House Ltd., London, England. 1953.

A butterfly farmer must be a rather rare individual, but a second generation butterfly farmer must be almost unique. More than fifty years ago, L. W. NEWMAN, then a tobacco brokers apprentice, gave his employer a case of butterflies he had bred. These attracted the attention of a wealthy collector who was so impressed that he urged NEWMAN to make a career of raising butterflies. Relying on the collector's guarantee to purchase £100 worth of butterflies a year for five years, NEWMAN forsook his apprenticeship and embarked upon raising butterflies as a full time occupation. The business prospered and now his son writes a history of the Butterfly Farm at Bexley, Kent. There are also chapters on other butterfly topics such as migration, introduction of new species, origins of popular names, butterfly auctions, and several chapters relating anecdotes of collectors and collecting.

Although the book is written for the general reader, it is filled with all sorts of practical hints for anyone interested in collecting or raising butterflies. Even the seasoned lepidopterist must lend an ear to the secrets of a commercial breeder. For example, there are observations on the care of hibernating caterpillars and notes on how to raise ant-eating lycænids. Such fascinating suggestions are casually dropped as the forced feeding of valuable hawk moths kept for brood stock. There are reflections on such diverse topics as breeding aberrations, flower preferences, forcing early emergence from pupation, and the length of time pairs remain coupled.

Between World Wars the popularity of butterfly collecting in England was such that the facilities of a small resort town, Royston in Hertfordshire, were filled with collectors awaiting the emergence of the Chalk-hill Blue. There are accounts of as many as a score of collectors on a single acre, some of them in frock coat and striped trousers. Americans may well speculate on the reason for the greater popularity of collecting in England. Did any American collector ever have difficulty with reservations because of the seasonal influx of other collectors into some favored spot?

Mr. NEWMAN, who has had much experience in the auction room (he first acted as a commissioned bidder while a school boy) relates that auction sales of butterflies have been regularly held for more than a hundred years. During World