

BOOK REVIEWS

BUTTERFLIES OF SOUTH AFRICA; WHERE, WHEN AND HOW THEY FLY. By D. A. Swanepoel. 320 pp., 17 col. pls. 1953. Publisher: Maskew Miller Limited, 29 Adderley Street, P.O. Box 396, Cape Town, South Africa. Price: Popular Edition, 75/-; De Luxe Edition, 105/-.

This delightful book, written by an amateur for the amateurs, and illustrated by numerous photographs and 17 color plates, contains all up-to-date information concerning the distribution, flight period, and habits of all species of butterflies occurring in South Africa, south of the Limpopo River.

Of all South African butterfly collectors, Mr. SWANEPOEL is without doubt the only one competent to write a book of this nature, as his long and numerous travels over the length and width of South Africa were undertaken with the sole purpose of collecting and observing our butterflies in their natural habitats, from the low coastal plains, forests, and bushveld to the highest peaks of Basutoland.

In the course of these travels Mr. SWANEPOEL has not only discovered numerous new species, but also found the habitats of many exceedingly rare butterflies which had been represented in collections by unique types, insufficiently dated in many cases. It took Mr. SWANEPOEL sometimes many years of patient search to rediscover the haunts of a rare butterfly, but his endless patience and tireless energy triumphed in the end.

Most of the information supplied was obtained at first hand and is given freely, without any attempts to conceal any feature of importance or confuse the reader by vague statements which are so often given by collectors jealous of their discoveries. It is especially this candid treatment of each case which makes the book an invaluable guide to beginners and specialists alike, and every collector can trust the information given down to the last detail, such as the exact mileage from a known spot to the often very restricted area of occurrence of a rare butterfly, or its date of emergence.

Mr. SWANEPOEL, or SWANNIE (as he is affectionately called by his numerous friends) is a born naturalist endowed with extremely acute powers of observation coupled with an infinite love of unspoiled nature and patience to find out its secrets.

The extremely pleasant and often amusing way in which Mr. SWANEPOEL tells of his experiences makes a fascinating reading for lepidopterists and laymen alike.

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A PROVISIONAL CHECK-LIST OF THE BUTTERFLIES OF THE ETHIOPIAN REGION. By Wallace Peters. 201 pp. 1952. Publisher: E. W. Classey, 91 Bedford Lane, Feltham, Middlesex, England. Price 45/- (\$6.30).

As the name implies, this monumental check-list is meant to be a provisional guide for those interested in the butterfly fauna of the Ethiopian region. It contains the names of 2653 species, apart from the very numerous names of lower categories, described from 1758 to the date of publication, 1952.

It is obvious that the compilation of such a list must have cost the author a great deal of patience and time, but it is felt that its publication should have been postponed until the revisional work by several authors engaged in the study of African butterflies has been completed, or at least some of the recent revisional works, quoted in the *Check-List*, have been studied. This applies to species and races alike. For instance, *Papilio demodocus* Esper is given as a race of *P. demoleus* Linnæus, whereas

it was conclusively shown to be a good species (van Son, 1949: 20); both the races *aureus* Moreau and *semlikana* Le Cerf belong to the species *P. lormieri* Distant and not to *P. menestheus* Drury as given by PETERS. The arrangement of *Mylothris* has been left as it was erroneously given by TALBOT, based on the fact that the male genitalia of *M. bernice* and *M. trimenia* were confused; this has resulted in the erection of two hypothetical groups, each of which had the habitus of one group and the genitalia of another! This error was duly corrected by TALBOT after he was notified of it by the present writer, who has rearranged the group correctly (van Son, 1949: 216). The far-reaching changes in the nomenclature of *Colotis* in the species *ione*, *erone*, *pallene*, and *lais* have been unnoticed, and the old erroneous arrangement of TALBOT left undisturbed. Some rather unfortunate changes have been brought about, for instance in *Precis*, where *clelia* Cramer has been given as a synonym of *ænone* Linnaeus, 1764, whereas in fact Linnaeus described *ænone* originally in 1758, the 1764 emendation being erroneous and invalid. The rather numerous spelling errors, both in the names of genera and those of species or forms, call at least for a corrected edition, but perhaps it would be better to wait for the appearance of some revisions now under way, in order to avoid further confusion.

In my second volume of *Butterflies of Southern Africa*, now in the press, eight new genera and numerous new species of Satyridæ are described, and their inclusion in a revised check-list appears to be desirable; similarly, the numerous recent works by STEMPFFER, and by STEMPFFER and BENNET, have brought about considerable changes and additions in the Lycænidæ.

May I suggest that in the cases of all names published before 1864, the year in which the *Zoological Record* has made its first appearance, the full reference to the original publication be given; this would considerably assist systematic workers who may wish to refer to the original description without having to consult old catalogues which are often difficult to obtain.

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Moths, by E. B. FORD, has just been published and will be reviewed soon in the *News*. Included are 32 colored and 24 black-and-white plates. This fine British book is the companion volume with Dr. FORD's earlier *Butterflies*. In the U.S.A. it is available from The Macmillan Co., 60 5th Ave., New York 11, N.Y., and local booksellers for \$7.50, or for a lower price from E. W. Classey, 91 Bedford Lane, Feltham, Middlesex, England, and other British agents.

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