

BOOK REVIEW

BUTTERFLIES OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO. Malcolm Barcant. Collins Publ., London. 1970. 314 pp. + 28 plates. Approximately \$6.00.

In the preface, Mr. Barcant states that his book "is prepared in a somewhat new . . . style" that he believes will become popular. I heartily agree that it is a new style, for what other book has divided its subjects by such ambiguous categories as "butterflies of the home garden," "fruit and sap suckers," "migrants," "locals and brooders," "semi-rare species," "species becoming rarer," or "the remaining Lycaenids"? Add to this the fact that there are no keys or alphabetical indexes, and you can imagine the problems of using the text as a field guide. A particular butterfly may be simultaneously a "butterfly of sunshine and flowers" (chapter 6F), "mud-puddle butterfly" (chapter 6D), "migrant" (chapter 6F), "southern resident" (chapter 6I), "well known species" (chapter 9A), "highly prized species" (chapter 9D), "species becoming more common" (chapter 9E), "species with special interests" (chapter 9G), and a "remaining Lycaenid" (chapter 10), but will be discussed under but one of these categories. For Trinidad butterflies, the situation is complicated even further by numerous groups of very similarly marked species. *Papilio thoas*, for instance, is treated as a "home garden butterfly" (page 74) with no cross reference to the almost identical *Papilio homothoas* (a species "becoming rarer" on page 188) or to the similarly marked *Papilio androgeus* and *lycophron* ("water drinkers" on page 92). For somebody unfamiliar with Neotropical butterflies, the only way to identify a specimen with complete assurance would be to read the entire book. I do not share Mr. Barcant's hope that this style of book will become more popular.

There is, however, quite a bit of excellent information in the book. Mr. Barcant has collected on Trinidad for many years and his comments on the habitat and habits of each species should be of considerable value to the student of Neotropical Lepidoptera, as should the citations of larval foodplants. One chapter deals with "flowers popular among adult nectar-sucking butterflies," which, aside from the practical collecting aspects, is valuable information to have recorded. Another section deals with collecting localities and seasons on Trinidad and would be of considerable value to somebody planning a collecting expedition to the island. Nearly all of the Trinidad species, excluding Hesperidae, are satisfactorily reproduced in color plates, with however, a reduction in size and no scale or other indication of actual size cited.

Aside from its general deficiency as a field guide, the book has a number of other weaknesses. Typographic errors, especially in the latin names of species, are frequent, e.g. *Anteos clorinde* is consistently cited as "*chlorinde*", *Papilio lycophron* as "*lycrophon*," *Heliconius hecale* as "*hecali*," etc., and it would be impractical to list all of these. There are also a number of erroneous statements such as "each species of butterfly is constant and its sex organs differ in shape from any other species so that mating outside its own female is not possible" or "it is necessary to add brackets to the name of the man who first described the butterfly."

I also believe that Mr. Barcant exercised poor judgement in introducing several species as new. *Pachthone barcanti*, which was described by G. E. Tite in 1968, is introduced as *Sp. Nov.* with no author cited. *Adelpha cytherea insularis* and *Sostrata pusilla manzanilla* are also introduced as *Sp. Nov.* with no author citation. Unless quite recently, these have not yet been published elsewhere and, if this is so, the descriptions in the text constitute original description. I am sure that this was not intended to be the case and I doubt if Barcant was designed to be their author.

A check-list of Trinidad butterflies (chapter 14) is arranged along no phylogenetic order in current use as follows: Satyridae, Danaidae (including *Acraea*), Ithomiidae, Heliconidae, Nymphalidae, Morphidae, Brassolidae, Libytheidae, Papilionidae, Pieridae, Riodinidae, Lycaenidae and Hesperidae. The generic names used are sadly dated for the Lycaenidae and Hesperidae, but pretty much in current usage for other families. In the Nymphaloid groups the only readily apparent errors, in this respect,

are the use of *Callicore* for *Diaethria* and, in turn, the retention of *Catagramma* for *Callicore*.

English vernacular names, such as *Flambeaus*, *Pages*, *Shoemakers*, *Crackers*, *Cattle-Hearts* and others, that are in actual use in Trinidad are recorded, perhaps for the first time. In spite of their lack of scientific value, I find them quite interesting and am glad to see them preserved by publication.

There is much of interest and value in the book; the serious student of Neotropical Lepidoptera may find it a valuable reference. However, it was intended primarily as a field guide and aid for the young collector on Trinidad; a usage for which it has some very serious limitations.

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The most serious fault with the book is one that cast a question over all the book contains. There are three names used in the book that are labeled "Sp. Nov." One of these is *Pachythone barcanti* which was described by G. E. Tite of the British Museum in 1968 and certainly Barcant knew that this was not a nameless species to which he was giving a name in this publication. The other two "Sp. Nov." are equally senseless. *Adelpha cytherea insularis* was described by Fruhstorfer in "1915" 1916 in Seitz' *Macrolepidoptera*, 5: 521. Barcant was familiar with this book and used it. *Sostrata pusilla manzanilla* was described by Kaye in 1940 and certainly anyone writing on Trinidadian butterflies must have examined all of Kaye's writings about them. I don't know whether these actions of declaring named species "Sp. Nov." was done in ignorance or with the supposition that no one would bother to investigate.

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THE MOTHS OF AMERICA NORTH OF MEXICO, FASCICLE 21, SPHINGOIDEA, by Ronald W. Hodges. 1971; 158 pp. + i-xii, 14 coloured plates; paper-bound. E. W. Classey Limited and R.B.D. Publications Inc. Distributed in North America by Entomological Reprint Specialists, P.O. Box 77971, Dockweiler Station, Los Angeles, California. Price \$24.00 U.S. (Subscription Price \$19.60).

This is the first published fascicle of the eagerly awaited series of the North American Heterocera. Dr. Hodges is to be congratulated on his very fine treatment of the 115 species of hawk moths in the boreal American fauna. Under each species heading is given a brief synonymical bibliography, a description of diagnostic structural and macular features, a listing of larval food plants and a discussion of the distribution. Keys to genera and species are presented, and these in most cases seem easy to use. Old keys to genera based on pupae (Mosher, 1918) and larvae (Forbes, 1911) are reproduced in an introductory section. The nomenclature of the various structural characters employed in classification is well explained both in the text and by line cut illustrations. The most outstandingly laudable feature of the volume, however, are the magnificent coloured plates; the specimens are all ready to fly right out of the pages.

This is a book that should be readily available to both the professional and the serious amateur.

D. F. HARDWICK, Editor.