

for whom it was designed. The book's true value will be realized if a host of minds is inspired to continue the study of heterocerous species in southern Africa or elsewhere.

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LEGION OF NIGHT—THE UNDERWING MOTHS, by Theodore D. Sargent. 1976. University of Massachusetts Press, Amherst, Massachusetts, 222 + xiii p., 8 color plates. Price \$15.00 (U.S.).

My introduction to the underwing moths was dramatic. As a high school student I had just taken up collecting Lepidoptera and had read with great interest the article on "sugaring" in W. J. Holland's *The Moth Book*. I had just sugared a path along a road in the northern Wisconsin forest. In the fading light of the evening I had discerned the outline of a beautifully banded underwing moth. I was forever hooked on the *Catocala*.

So it was with unexpected pleasure that I read Theodore D. Sargent's *Legion of Night—The Underwing Moths*. He has captured the romance of these unusual and beautiful insects.

Statistically the book contains two hundred twenty-two pages, and has eight colored plates depicting one hundred twenty-six specimens in color consisting of seventy-one species of underwing moths found in the eastern United States. In addition there are numerous black and white colored plates and many fine drawings.

Sargent's book gives a complete survey of the *Catocala* of the eastern United States, a summary of the current biological information on these species, and introduction to the scientific investigations which are being conducted on these moths.

The species accounts give the range, within the scope of the geographical area covered by this book, the seasonal occurrence, larval food plants, and the interesting behavioral aspects of the adults of each species. In this respect it is quite unique. None of the work done on the *Catocala* in the past has gone into these aspects. In this respect it is most helpful to the field entomologist. So few works on Lepidoptera seem to be concerned with this aspect of collecting. Every species of *Catocala* one might encounter in the eastern United States is covered completely.

Dr. Sargent gives an interesting history of the entomologists who described the species found in the area or wrote about these moths in his chapter "Of Men and Names." Thus, we get an insight into the entomological lives of such men as Coleman T. Robinson, Augustus Radcliffe Grote, Achille Guenée, Ferdinand Heinrich, Herman Strecker, William Henry Edwards, the Reverend George D. Hulst, and Francis Walker. The book contains excerpts from the published letters of several of these entomologists, particularly Strecker, Grote, and Hulst. None of these men held the others in any great esteem, and their sniping at each other makes for interesting reading. Apparently they were unaware of the laws on libel and slander. In any event there is no record of any civil actions arising out of these feuds.

Each species is accurately described, and similar species distinguished. The relative abundance or scarcity of the particular species is fully discussed. Of great importance to the collector is something about the larval habits and the habits of the adults in coming to light or to bait, or to various types of traps. The book contains much statistical material on abundance of the various species and something about the predators of the larva and adults, particularly bird and bat damage to the adults.

I would make only one criticism of the book. On the theory nobody is perfect, I would liked to have seen the plates with a lighter background. Since so many of

the *Catocala* have at least dark forewings, the specimens do not stand out against the black background, and in this respect I think a paler background would have produced much better colored plates.

In any event this is a most worthwhile contribution to the science of Lepidoptera. This volume should be in the library of every moth collector.

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