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BOOK REVIEW

THE BRITISH BUTTERFLIES, THEIR ORIGIN AND ESTABLISHMENT, by R. L. H. Dennis, 1977. E. W. Classey Ltd., Park Road, Faringdon, Oxon., England SN7 7DR. 318 pp., 20 figs., 15 tables. $17.50 U.S.

Here is a book that should be of interest to all students of biogeography. It is well done but many general collectors of butterflies will find it hard going. First, it is not a book to help determine what species you have from the British Isles. It is a book that lives up to its second title. Dennis has divided his book into four sharply separate sections. North Americans may find the first part, "Geomorphological Framework" a bit puzzling at first. The table on p. 7 (the first page of the first chapter) sets forth the nomenclature used for the Pleistocene in northwestern Europe, including the British Isles. Add a third column to this, naming the equivalent North American terms, and you will be allright.

The other sections in sequence are "Recent Rhopalocera geography and habitat adjustments," "Subspecies and subspeciation," and lastly "The arrival sequence and establishment of the British Rhopalocera." In addition, there are four appendices containing useful information, particularly for those of us on this side of the ocean who lack intimate knowledge of the British fauna and flora.

The author has done an unusually good job assembling a wealth of data about the Pleistocene in the British Isles. He retells this in detail. It is best to have a good scale map of Great Britain and Ireland at hand unless you are intimately familiar with the geography of them. Maps would have helped in this section, but I suppose cost would have been prohibitive. In the second part of the book Dennis treats two subjects: zoogeography and adaptation to the environment. There is considerable redundancy, but it is not obtrusive. It may be helpful. Here is clearly demonstrated why the British Isles is the ideal place for such a study at this time. The region is essentially a closed system for butterflies with few migrants and substantial sea barriers. Collectors have been active for two centuries or more and their data are available. The region is small enough—a total area considerably less than the State of Montana. The amount of information about the area is greater than that for any comparable area in either Canada or the United States. This gives the zoogeographer an ample working sample. The geography side is equally well-reported. The ideas of geological mapping and stratigraphy and the foundation of modern geology are British inventions of the 18th century. Detailed large scale mapping is available for the entire United Kingdom. All of these are needed before such a task as Dennis set for himself can be confidently attacked.

The second half of the book, Sections C and D, contains an able discussion of subspeciation as evident in the British Isles. Dennis's interpretation of subspeciation, as related to geography, flora and modern and past climates, can be duplicated nowhere on the American continents. The last section is the interpretation of the data presented in the first three sections. Here Dennis had two earlier similar studies to use, and to agree or disagree with. He did all three. B. P. Beirne wrote several times on the subject and summed up his knowledge in *The Origin and History of British Macrolepidoptera* found in the *Trans. Roy. Entomol. Soc. Lond., 98*, 1947. E. B. Ford set forth his views in detail in *Butterflies* published by Collins, London. The latest edition of this delightful book was released in 1957. Dennis had several advantages over either of these able authors. He had a large number of precise radiocarbon dates and the results of the very recent and extensive paleontological studies of Pleistocene and Recent (Flandrian) insects. Needless to say, Tables 14 and 15, setting forth the ideas of the three writers, show progressive changes in opinion. It will be a very long

time before a comparable work can be written for any part of the New World. This is a beautiful example of what can be done when data are available. The book is an important guide for those who would engage upon detailed zoogeographic studies.

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OBITUARY

JAMES H. BAKER (1910–1978)

Mr. James "Jim" Huffman Baker, charter member of the Lepidopterists' Society, died April 14, 1978 at St. Luke's Hospital in Boise, Idaho after a long illness. He was 67. Jim was born Aug. 14, 1910 in Baker, Oregon, the son of Deering F. and Bernice Huffman Baker. He graduated from Baker High School in 1928, was employed by the Citizen's National Bank in Baker, and then ran the family grocery, Baker's Supermarket, for over 35 years. Jim was a man of many activities. In addition to his lifelong interest in insects of many orders, he bowled, traveled, was interested in general nature study, collected rocks, and was an antique dealer and a gem worker.

He published several scientific papers, and his extensive collecting disclosed several insects that were subsequently named, including *Euphydryas anicia bakeri* Stallings and Turner, and *Celastrina argiolus bakeri* (Clench). He worked closely with both the American Museum of Natural History and the Smithsonian Institution. He was also a member of the Coleopterists' Society.

Jim will be greatly missed by all of his many friends and colleagues who have enjoyed his company and his family's hospitality. He is survived by his wife, Ilah; a son, James Michael Baker; a daughter, Judith Ann Haswell of Pullman, Washington; and two granddaughters.

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