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MARIPOSAS DE VENEZUELA, by Theophile Raymond. 1982. Ediciones Corpoven, Caracas, Venezuela. 275 pp., 53 plates. Hard cover, 29.5 × 23.7 cm, approx. \$30.00.

Theophile Raymond was a classic naturalist about whose life we know very little, except for his scientific accomplishments during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. His research in natural history was diverse and notable and his role in the early scientific development of Caracas is well recognized, but he is best known for his studies on butterflies.

Young Raymond arrived in Venezuela from Martinica, probably in the early 1890's, and it is presumed that he collected butterflies ever since. His premature death, in 1922, left fatherless perhaps one of the best and largest butterfly collections in Venezuela. Nothing is known about what happened to this collection, and the reason why it was not preserved by any of his notable scientist coworkers remains an enigma. Today there is no doubt that it was lost forever.

His manuscript *Fauna Entomológica Venezolana. Lepidópteros Rhopaloceros*, written in 1902, which remained undiscovered for many decades, now is available to lepidopterists in the present excellent facsimile edition entitled *Mariposas de Venezuela*. Included in this edition is an interesting biographical sketch of Raymond, written by the now deceased Dr. Francisco Fernández-Yépez, a pioneer Venezuelan lepidopterist. Fernández-Yépez also made modifications in the original text, added new identifications, and corrected errors. Fifty-three full-color original plates, drawn and painted by Raymond, are included. The first 47 plates represent the most common butterflies (and some Geometridae and Uraniidae) of Venezuela. The remaining six plates illustrate members of the family Sphingidae. Only the HesperIIDae and some members of the Lycaenidae and Satyridae are not classified, because Fernández-Yépez believed that more time and study were required to properly identify the specimens illustrated.

The original text of 1902 was hand written in beautiful classic script, providing a strong indication of the care and dedication he put into his scientific work. The calligraphy of the latter pages tends to be notoriously impaired, possibly due to his battle with tuberculosis and his interest in concluding the work rapidly. A sanitary seal printed in the original book is witness to his lost battle. Despite the fact that it represents an unfinished work and that it far from covers the entire butterfly fauna of Venezuela, it remains a valuable scientific and historic contribution to Venezuelan and neotropical entomology. It is a unique and rare documentation of the butterfly fauna of Caracas and neighboring areas of yesteryear, before strong demographic influences began to change the abundance and diversity of this group of colorful insects.

Mariposas de Venezuela, published in 1972 by Michael Schmidt, is primarily directed at amateur lepidopterists and provides but a poor description of the abundant and rich fauna of this country. Raymond's work is a much more professional representation, even though it was written much earlier. It covers both practical and theoretical lepidopterology, and contains an exceptional recount of the classic taxonomic methods of Linné, Dégéer, Scopoli, Fabricius, Latreille, Godart, and many other naturalists. Finally, Raymond describes the natural history of thirteen species of Papilionidae, demonstrating a good capacity for such detailed biological studies.

Undoubtedly, this book is a bibliographic curiosity, but it is also an important work that reflects both scientific and artistic facets of lepidopterology.

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