

BOOK REVIEWS

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DISCOVERING MOTHS—NIGHTTIME JEWELS IN YOUR OWN BACKYARD, by John Himmelman, 2002. Softcover, \$18.95 from Down East Books, Camden, Maine. ISBN 0-89272-528-1. 232 pages, with 22 color plates and numerous B&W drawings.

The study of moths is essentially a subjective and emotional pursuit. If we plotted out the allocation of resources—dollars and number of researchers—against various measures of moth diversity, no cost accountant could make sense of the pattern. The few economically important pests would show a concentration of effort, but otherwise there would be an eclectic mishmash of attention to moths that are variously large and gaudy, bizarre in habit, or tiny and obscure, probably largely because they sparked a young mind for these very qualities. As a consequence, taxonomic specialists heavily populate the ranks of both dedicated amateur and professional entomologists. John Himmelman's book *Discovering Moths* is a reminder that we are missing a lot.

Unlike the situation for butterflies, the young person or newly seduced adult has few choices for general books on moths (primarily Covell's excellent *A Field Guide to the Moths of Eastern North America* and the Dover reprint of Holland's *Moth Book*) to nurture a developing interest. Other treatments are often too scientifically lofty and detailed and too expensive to be widely accessible.

Discovering Moths is a refreshing addition to the Lepidoptera literature. More than a compilation of facts and descriptions revering moth diversity, the book is a personal narrative that appeals to our (often suppressed) emotional attraction to Leps. The chapters cover the author's personal experiences and reactions to a variety of topics: sugaring and blacklighting, moth-related activities through the seasons, moth lore in our culture (*Of Moths and Men*), past and present moth experts and other colorful characters, a brief and select introduction to moth families, and some material on collecting, rearing, and photographing moths. Sprinkled throughout are nuggets of life history observations on both familiar and many obscure but attractive species. Representative species for fifteen families, various larvae, and some day-flying moths are well-illustrated in color, and the author's own attractive ink stipple drawings introduce various sections and depict (sometimes whimsically) various moths and caterpillars. I found only a few insignificant errors or typos ("circumference" instead of diameter as a measure of

size, and a photo legend reversing the identity of Dave Wagner and Brian Scholtens during the "BioBlitz" diversity project).

Himmelman is a professional writer on nature topics, not a professional biologist nor strictly interested only in Lepidoptera. His material reflects a regional orientation to the East Coast and New England where he is based, and his prose is personal, wry, and witty. Such writing can be an unstable balance between humorous and colorful discourse, and being too contrived and familiar so as to distract from the subject at hand. Himmelman largely avoids these rhetorical excesses, although some readers used to the concise, formal, grammatically correct style we normally encounter in our Lep literature will have to make an adjustment. His Eastern bias in no way detracts from the value of the book as an explanation for our fascination with moths, rather than as a taxonomic overview of North American species. I would have liked to have seen a section on Holland and his reign at Carnegie Museum as well as a mention of some of the past western U.S. luminaries such as Lloyd Martin with his stories of 19th century collectors. These topics and others are some this book should incite others to write about. I highly recommend *Discovering Moths* for anyone with an interest in our natural history heritage.

MICHAEL M. COLLINS, 11901 Miwok Path, Nevada City, California 95959, USA

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FIELD GUIDE TO BUTTERFLIES OF SOUTH DAKOTA, by Gary M. Marrone. South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks, Pierre, South Dakota, 2002. 378 pages. Softcover, \$38.95 + \$5.00 shipping from the publisher (412 W. Missouri, Pierre, South Dakota 57501 or on the web at www.sdgifp.info). ISBN 0-9712463-1-9.

An account of South Dakota's butterflies could have been written by no one except Gary Marrone who has studied this fauna for nearly three decades. This compact book treats each of the 177 species known from the state. The introductory chapters are brief (18 pages) giving encapsulated versions of butterfly life history, studies of butterflies in South Dakota, physiography and climate of the state, and habitats illustrated with photographs. Families of butterflies are introduced by a general description of less than a page. The species accounts include the common and scientific nomenclature, a short description of the adult and sec-

tions on similar species, distribution and habitat, early stages (i.e., one sentence with a general description of the apparently mature larva), larval host plants, adult energy sources, flight period, general comments, and, at times, specific references. Two or more photographs of spread specimens mostly from South Dakota superbly illustrate each species; these include at least dorsal and ventral surfaces and show additional specimens as needed to elaborate major variation. A photograph from life and/or of early stages illustrates some of the species. Distributional information is mapped at the county level and embedded into the species account. The book concludes with a checklist, a butterfly calendar, a hypothetical list, a glossary, a bibliography of useful references, and an index.

In a field guide, quibbles concerning nomenclature are largely irrelevant. Marrone recognizes acceptable family combinations with Riodinidae separated from Lycaenidae and *Libytheana* included within the Nymphalidae. The common and scientific names largely follow Opler (1999) and NABA (apparently Cassie et al. 1995) and are as contemporaneous as one could want. *Satyrium* and *Callophrys* are treated as all inclusive genera at the expense of *Harkenclenus* and *Mitoura*, *Incisalia*, and *Deciduphagus*, respectively. The same broad stroke generic approach was also applied to other lycaenids (*Lycaena*), to some papilionids (*Papilio*), and to certain nymphalids (e.g., *Nymphalis*, *Vanessa*, *Phyciodes*, *Boloria*). The use of infraspecific names is somewhat uneven. At first it was assumed that a subspecific name was given if the South Dakotan taxon was not of the nominotypical subspecies, yet this is not always so (e.g., *Pieris marginalis*, *Speyeria coronis*, *Speyeria mormonia*). These and other taxonomic decisions in no way detract from the book's intention as an identification guide to South Dakota's butterflies. A large number of aberrations are also illustrated that, although unusual in a field guide, include many heretofore not illustrated in a readily available publication. One major blunder involves the apparent switching of the plates for *Pieris marginalis* and *Pieris oleracea*.

This book is a true field guide with little extrinsic information between its covers. Those interested in more than identification may glean tidbits on general distribution, habitat, larval hostplants (although one is not always sure that the plants referred to are those used in South Dakota), and adult nutrient sources. The strength of this book for the researcher lies in the phenological data in the species accounts and, with more detail, in the appended butterfly calendar that is updated from Marrone (1994). The *Field Guide to Butterflies of South Dakota* is a must for anyone inter-

ested in the butterflies of that state and adjacent areas on the northern Great Plains. It also serves as a nice companion to the recently published guide for North Dakota (Royer 2003).

LITERATURE CITED

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 OPLER, P. A. 1999. A field guide to Western butterflies. 2nd ed. Boston, Houghton Mifflin. 540 pp.
 ROYER, R. A. 2003. Butterflies of North Dakota: an atlas and guide. Minot State Univ. Science Monograph No. 2. Minot, North Dakota, Minot State Univ. 197 pp.

GEORGE T. AUSTIN, *Nevada State Museum and Historical Society, 700 Twin Lakes Drive, Las Vegas, Nevada 89107, USA*

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NYPHALIDAE DE MÉXICO I (DANAINAE, APATURINAE, BIBLIDINAE & HELICONIINAE): DISTRIBUCIÓN GEOGRÁFICA E ILUSTRACIÓN, by Armando Luis-Martínez, Jorge E. Llorente-Bousquets & Isabel Vargas-Fernández. Illustrations by Pál János. 2003. Published by Facultad de Ciencias, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México and Comisión Nacional Para el Conocimiento y Uso de la Biodiversidad (CONABIO), Mexico City. 249 pages, 30 color plates, 124 distribution maps. Softcover, glossy paper, 21.5 × 28.0 cm, ISBN 970-32-0693-X. Available from Andrew D. Warren, Dept. of Zoology, Oregon State Univ., Corvallis, OR 97331 (warrena@science.oregonstate.edu)—send personal check for US \$40 (includes postage from Mexico City) and shipping address with phone number.

This book is the second in a series of fascicles treating the butterfly fauna of Mexico, produced by the "Alfonso L. Herrera" Zoology Museum (MZFC), at the National Autonomous University of Mexico, in Mexico City. The volume is presented in the same format as the first (see Llorente et al. 1997, Warren 1999), and treats all Mexican species in the subfamilies Danainae, Apaturinae, Biblidinae & Heliconiinae (basically sensu Harvey 1991); a total of 181 subspecies of 140 species from 37 genera. It is the first time Mexican members of several genera, including *Adelpha* Hübner and *Doxocopa* Hübner, have been treated in detail.

Like the first in the series, this volume is crammed full of exact details, numerous facts and statistics, and data from over 73,000 specimens presented in tele-