
With 118,000 inhabitants Innsbruck is the fifth largest city of Austria. Situated in the Inn river valley, it is protected by high mountain chains to the north as well as to the south. It comprises an area of 105 square kilometers and altitudes range from 565 to 2,641 meters. During the last decades, urbanisation increased seriously, causing an alarming decline of butterflies and moths, a characteristic situation in all of Central Europe. In spring 2004 a team of lepidopterists started to record the current butterfly and moth fauna of Innsbruck. Until 2006, recording took place from March to October every year using nets, artificial lights, sugar baits, and pheromones. An astonishing number of nearly 1,200 species was recorded. However, analyzing the historical data dating back 150 years, 920 species formerly known from Innsbruck could not be found again. Though there are several species difficult to record, like Nepticulidae, the decline is also obvious in butterflies. Their number of species decreased from 138 to 87, or a third the species, since lepidopterological research started in Innsbruck 150 years ago. The largest decline happened in the period of 1950 to 1979. Altogether, 437 species have been recorded for the last time during that period. More details are given and analyzed in the excellent book on the butterflies and moths of Innsbruck by Huemer and Erlebach. Written in German and in a popular science style it will be understandable for entomologists as well as amateurs in this field. It is illustrated with 255 color figures, mostly photographs of Lepidoptera and their habitats, but also maps and graphs. The book is divided into nine chapters, an (1) introduction, (2) a chapter on nomenclature, characters, the metamorphosis and lifespan of Lepidoptera, (3) diversity of species in Innsbruck and their systematics, (4) history of lepidopterological research in Innsbruck (5) a description of the areas of unspoiled nature and the habitats of Lepidoptera, (6) threats, local losses of Lepidoptera and their conservation, (7) experiencing nature, (8) literature, and (9) an appendix with the list of species known from Innsbruck for the periods before 1878, 1879–1914, 1915–1949, 1950–1979, 1980–1999, and since 1999. Altogether, the reader can learn about Lepidoptera in general, the history of their study in Innsbruck, changes to their habitats and reasons for their decline, and he can get an introduction to the literature and an idea of the current composition of the lepidopteran fauna of Innsbruck. Thus, the book summarizes the knowledge on Lepidoptera in Innsbruck for professionals, amateurs, and those who are just interested in nature, and it might be a starting point to study or just to enjoy butterflies and moths. This book is not just written by lepidopterists for lepidopterists. It has the potential to interest non-lepidopterists to enjoy butterflies and moths, to respect them, and to care for them in the future.

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