
This collection of papers is nicely produced in a bound volume. It contains an introductory chapter with some tentative ecological evaluation and accompanying tables. There follow 22 chapters of a taxonomic nature by different authors treating particular families, and there is a brief final chapter with a biogeographical overview. The introductory chapter describes the methods used and the expeditions upon which the book is based. Broadly speaking there are no surprises, light trapping being the chief collecting method. A 160W blended lamp was used against a sheet, and battery powered actinic traps; a malaise trap was also used. No other collecting method by day is reported.

In contrast with earlier expeditions to Africa to collect lepidoptera attempts were made to quantify the catches, so that ecological calculations could be made. The material was collected in three expeditions in 2000–2002. Seasonality is very little understood in Africa, but lepidoptera are generally more plentiful when there is rainfall; few data are given in relation to this but the expeditions took place at dates when some rain could be expected. As it is admitted the data are few for ecological purposes, but estimates are calculated for $\alpha$- and $\beta$- diversity at particular sites.

The selection of families for taxonomic treatment in this volume is arbitrary, depending of the availability of specialists in different families, although it is stated that some others may be dealt with in subsequent publications. The treatment of families varies, this reflects the different amount of knowledge about the group being treated, so for example the paper on Saturniidae with just two species is able to include distribution maps and considerable detail. Some are first class, all are in English with the exception of the Pterophoridae which is in German. The section on Cosmopterigidae (s.l.) is extended to include a checklist for the whole of southern Africa; the paper on Scythrididae sensibly assigns only numbers to the taxa pending further research. An interesting paper on the Galacticidae contains a discussion on the systematic position and composition of this family. Drawings or photographs of the genitalia accompany species descriptions, styles vary considerably. There are 13 colour plates depicting many of the newly described species and one with photographs of the localities.

The fauna of Africa, especially the microlepidoptera, have been much neglected – with the exception of work by Janse and Vári in South Africa. It is always most helpful if a family or group of species can be covered comprehensively for a whole region, but despite that this book has to be welcomed as a significant contribution. One recognises that those providing funds expect to see some outcome, and the speed with which this has been achieved is remarkable. We look forward to the promised successive volumes in this series.

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