

Book reviews / Critiques de livres

Thrips of California. Distinguishing pest species among California's rich native thrips fauna. Mark S. Hoddle, Laurence A. Mound and Dena Paris. 2008. (CD)

Published by Centre for Biological Information Technology (CBIT), The University of Queensland, Australia. \$59.00 (AUD). ISBN 978-1864999143 <http://www.cbitt.uq.edu.au/>

Thrips are widespread in North America and comprise a diverse native fauna and a significant adventive fauna as well. A number of thrips species are economically important invasive pests on horticultural plants and agricultural crops. This computer-identification product, using the Lucid key technology, is a guide to the thrips species of California, a significant portion of the North American fauna. It provides an interactive identification key to 208 species of thrips and descriptions of 264 species. Additional summary information on the biology, distribution and taxonomy of the species is supplied as well as overviews on the endemic and introduced faunas and plant hosts in California. More than 1300 high-quality images of species-level morphological features are provided. Additional supporting information on general biology, classification, preparation of thrips specimens and thrips as pests, is given.

A unique feature of this product is an interactive glossary of terms where the technical terms of thrips morphology are defined and also illustrated through the use of an image zoom feature and moving arrow animation to shift the view of the particular feature. In addition to its intended use as an identification key, this software provides an excellent platform for teaching and learning about thrips biology and taxonomy. All information is presented within a well-organized and phylogenetic framework. There are additional informative links to online sources of information on thrips and to copies of useful taxonomic publications.

This is an extremely well-produced product, which takes advantage of the latest developments in the use of digital technology in systematics. Most workers, both taxonomists

and the users of taxonomic products, have a computer near their microscopes. This type of interactive, well-illustrated software is an indication of future directions in digital-age taxonomy; so much supporting information and imagery can be supplied, much more than the financial-constrained, traditional approach of hard-copy publication.

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Catalogue of Palaearctic Coleoptera, Volume 4: Elateroidea, Derodontoidea, Bostrichoidea, Lymexyloidea, Cleroidea, Cucujoidea. Löbl, I. and Smetana, A. (Eds.) 2007. Apollo Books, Stenstrup, Denmark. 935 pp.

Every aspect of this fourth volume of this Catalogue of Palaearctic Coleoptera is remarkable. Thirty-five distinguished coleopterists, in many instances the leading authorities of their respective taxonomic groups, have contributed to 59 sections on the families and subfamilies of the Elateroidea, Derodontoidea, Bostrichoidea, Lymexyloidea, Cleroidea, and Cucujoidea of the Palaearctic Region.

The book contains all the elements that one would expect of a thorough and comprehensive catalogue: a complete listing of all taxa in systematic order with complete information on all species, authors, and dates of publication, and all published synonymies. For every valid species its country-by-country distribution in the Palaearctic region (and province-by-province distribution in China) is listed. This is accompanied by an encyclopedically thorough compilation of cited references (which extends over 258 pages) of great utility to entomologists and other researchers. There are separate indices for family group names (4 pages) and genus group names (25 pages) with synonyms indicated in italics.

All these elements should be present in a good catalogue, and they are in this one, compiled in thorough, attentive, and painstaking detail, which are the *sine qua non* of a catalogue worth its systematic salt. However, this catalogue contains even more. Ten pages at the beginning of the volume list the errata for the first three volumes of the series. The subsequent 49 pages contain detailed and very useful information compiled under the rubric of "New Acts and Comments." In this section all the new taxonomic acts reported in the volume are listed, and in some families there are a very large number of new synonyms, names, combinations, and revalidations. For example, in the section on Elateridae (by Peter Cate), 443 new synonymies, 41 new combinations and assignments, four replacement names, three changes in rank, one resurrection, and six changes in spelling are reported. The compilation of all these taxonomic and nomenclatural changes, and the many comments written by the respective authors, constitute a very useful compilation of systematic information

For anyone interested in any aspect of the study of Coleoptera in the Palaearctic region, this book will be a welcome reference. Moreover, even for North American coleopterists, this will be a useful volume, given the large number of adventive species on this continent, and the fact that there are many commonalities in the supra-specific taxonomy of Palaearctic and Nearctic Coleoptera. To facilitate even more detailed queries on any of the material in the book, complete addresses (snail-mail and e-mail) are provided for all the contributing authors of the volume.

Moreover, the book is beautifully printed and bound in hardcover with sewn signatures, easy to read and certain to last a lifetime. It is available from Apollo Books (<http://www.apollobooks.com/>) in Denmark at a cost of \$216 USD.

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Books available for review:

Control of Pests and Weeds by Natural Enemies: An Introduction to Biological Control. Van Drieshe R., M. Hoddle and T. Center. 2008. Wiley-Blackwell Publishing. 484 pp.

Ecology of Insects: Concepts and Applications. 2nd Ed., 2008. Speight, M.R., M.D. Hunter and A.D. Watt. 2008. Wiley-Blackwell Publishing.

Biological Notes on an Old Farm: Exploring Common Things in the Kingdoms of Life. Wiggins, G.B. 2009. Royal Ontario Museum.

Frog Biting Midges of the World (Corethrellidae: Diptera). Borkent, A. 2008. Zootaxa (Auckland, New Zealand: Magnolia Press) 1804: 456 pp.

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