

Hewitson on Butterflies 1867-1877. William C. Hewitson. Hampton, Middlesex: E. W. Classey, 1972. [246] pp; various paginations. \$12.50. Distributed exclusively in North America by Entomological Reprint Specialists, Los Angeles, California.

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BOOK REVIEWS

HEWITSON ON BUTTERFLIES 1867-1877. William C. Hewitson. Hampton, Middlesex: E. W. Classey, 1972. [246] pp; various paginations. \$12.50. Distributed exclusively in North America by Entomological Reprint Specialists, Los Angeles, California.

The English naturalist William C. Hewitson (1806-78) was trained as a surveyor, but various good fortunes enabled him to retire at an early age and devote his attention to the pursuit of natural history. His chief interests were entomology and ornithology, the classic *British Oology* (1833-42) being his major contribution to the latter field.

Hewitson's publications on the Lepidoptera were numerous. His wealth allowed him to purchase large numbers of specimens, and he is said once to have paid three hundred and fifty guineas, an enormous sum at the time, for a single butterfly. In the tradition of James Petiver and Dru Drury, he urged persons to collect for him in various parts of the globe, and supported their efforts with ample financial reward. Hewitson was thus able to build an unparalleled private collection of diurnal Lepidoptera, and spent a great amount of his time in describing and illustrating new and rare species.

He was, however, largely a "closet naturalist." J. W. Dunning's obituary in *The Entomologist* (1878:11, 166-68) admitted that Hewitson's writings "contain little on the habits of the *Rhopalocera* he figured, little on classification or distribution. . . . For these reasons he cannot be placed in the first rank of entomologists; and in truth he never aimed to be more than a describer and faithful depicter of species discovered by others. . . . His figures, admirable as they are, are the figures of so many butterflies taken out of a drawer, all wings, set out with provoking uniformity, no leg or palpus visible, no details of structure, without any idea of life: they seem to tell their own tale that they were painted by one who had never seen them in their native haunts, who knew them only as cabinet specimens." However, Hewitson's illustrations, especially those he furnished for *The Genera of Diurnal Lepidoptera* (1846-52) by Edward Doubleday and John O. Westwood, and those in his own *Illustrations of Exotic Butterflies* (1852-77), contributed greatly to his reputation in the nineteenth century. Hewitson's collections, presented to the nation, are in the British Museum (Natural History).

The present volume, another in E. W. Classey's reprint series of scarce entomological works, contains facsimiles of four of Hewitson's efforts, chiefly on tropical butterflies. These are *Descriptions of One Hundred New Species of Hesperidae* (1867-68); *Descriptions of Some New Species of Lycaenidae* (1868); *Equatorial Lepidoptera Collected by Mr. Buckley* (1869-77), and *Bolivian Butterflies Collected by Mr. Buckley* (1874). All can be considered rare, and as they contain over four hundred species descriptions, there is surely ample justification for a reprint edition. (Scholarly justification does not always seem to concern some reprint publishers, who too often are led by the lure of profits in this booming field to reissue volumes which might catch the eye of order librarians at universities, but which have little real value to research workers. The practice has led to lengthy lists of "available" titles which, often, could be more wisely purchased at lower prices in the second-hand book market, if indeed they should be purchased at all. Thankfully, the few publishers who produce entomological reprints have chosen their lists according to the sound criteria of value and scarcity, and E. W. Classey is an example for reprinters in other fields to emulate.)

Hewitson on Butterflies is attractive and sturdy, and if the price seems high for the size, that is explained by the economics of specialized publishing; restricted sales mean small press runs and resulting higher cost per volume. There is a brief preface by L. G. Higgins which contains much useful information, but does not satisfy in all respects. There is precious little about Hewitson's life in it, and although that could be excused by the need for economy of space, we should expect at least the year of his birth, which can only be inferred from a statement that at the age of forty he became associated with Doubleday in the *Genera* (1846-52). Titles of separate works mentioned in the preface are given inconsistently, either set off by quotation marks or not differentiated at all; never are they in italics as one would expect them to be, although italics were available to the typesetter. The repeated use of "etc." in the preface is somewhat jarring. Although

half of the volume is devoted to publications on Buckley's specimens, Hewitson's tireless, efficient and colorful collector is not discussed in the preface; we are not even given his first name (it was Clarence). Finally, a note indicating biographical and bibliographical sources would have aided the reader who might wish to know more about Hewitson.

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THE CADDIS FLIES, OR TRICHOPTERA, OF ILLINOIS (1944). Herbert H. Ross, illustrated by C. O. Mohr, K. M. Sommerman, and the author. Entomological Reprint Specialists, Los Angeles, California, 1972. 8 unnumbered pages plus pp. 1-326, figures 1-961 plus frontispiece. Bound, \$9.95.

After its initial appearance in August, 1944, as *Bulletin of the Illinois Natural History Survey, Vol. 23, Art. 1*, this work quickly became a classic. With the passage of time it has continued to gain in stature. The great expansion of interest in the Trichoptera, to which Dr. Ross calls attention in his preface to the reprint edition, has been stimulated to a significant degree, by *The Caddis Flies of Illinois*.

Although the value of the bulletin to the systematic entomologist is obvious, much of its usefulness is to the student of aquatic ecosystems who, while often without training in insect taxonomy, finds the accuracy and clarity of Ross's figures and descriptions intelligible. A generation of fishery biologists and water quality specialists has come to rely on them.

A helpful feature of the reprint edition is Ross's listing, in the prefatory note, of names of some of the world's more actively publishing trichopterists, and the citation of Fisher's bulky, still ongoing *Trichopteronum Catalogus*. These references will assist the serious student in bridging the three-decade time gap.

Entomological Reprint Specialists is to be commended for making this work once more readily available. Appearing, as it does, in hard binding, the price is reasonable.

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