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BOOK REVIEW

THE WORLD OF THE TENT-MAKERS. A natural history of the eastern tent caterpillar. V. G. Dethier. University of Massachusetts Press, Amherst, MA 01002. 1980. 148 pages, \$12.50 (cloth), \$5.95 (paper).

This book is small in size, but large in stature, a simply eloquent narrative on the encounters of genes; a look at the problems and solutions evolved by the eastern tent caterpillar in getting from one year to the next. If anything can be criticized, it has to be the title, since it gives the impression that here is simply another account of the natural history of the eastern tent caterpillar. This is far from the whole truth, as anybody who knows Dethier's writings will know. What isn't conveyed is the fascinating style and the message of Dethier; the way he blends facts about the eastern tent caterpillar and the mysteries and problems of all life into a philosophical perspective of the universe that ends with the question: Why? This is a book that you won't put down, and that all should read, more than once.

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