

Besprechung / Review

HOFMANN, A. F. & TREMEWAN, W. G. 2020: “The natural history of burnet moths”, part 3. – Proceedings of the Museum Witt, Munich: 1097 pp.

Burnet moths are absolutely beautiful and fascinating creatures. They are also very interesting and diverse. Therefore, the dedication with which the two authors have devoted themselves to this group of moths is completely understandable. This fascination has now resulted in the third volume of a monumental monograph on the genus *Zygaena*; a double volume with a total of more than 1000 large-format pages and sheer countless colour illustrations of the highest quality. After this work, there is probably no other major insect group in the world that has been treated as comprehensively as the burnet moths, because each of the 108 species worldwide is discussed in detail on several pages.

The book is structured according to the 26 species groups of zygaenid moths. Each of these is given its own colour code so that each group can be found quickly and reliably. Each individual species group usually comprises less than half a dozen species, but this ranges from just one (as for example for the groups of *corsica*, *orana* and *exulans*) to 21 species (*manlia* group). For each of these groups, a list of species, a very brief summary of the most important, and a distribution map of the group are summarised on an overview double-page.

The chapters on the individual species are all structured in the same way, which makes the book very clear. First, the subspecific differentiation for each species is discussed in detail. In this context, biogeographical aspects that might be related to this differentiation are often discussed. In addition, specimens of typical individuals of all relevant

subspecies are reproduced in larger than life size and in excellent quality. Furthermore, a distribution map indicating the type localities of the subspecies is included, as well as another map indicating the known occurrences of individual specimens. If necessary, these are also divided into several individual maps. The authors then go into detail on the biology of each species. First the eggs and their placement are described, then the caterpillars with their characteristics, followed by information on the larval food plants and finally the description of the pupa and its cocoon. As the first author of the monograph is a highly talented rearer of burnet moths, having reared almost all species already, there are excellent pictures of all developmental stages in larger-than-life size. The species chapters are concluded by a description of the respective habitats and ecological requirements, and in the case of more widespread species, regional differences are often also discussed. Scattered throughout the species chapters are excellent pictures of the animals in their habitats and also of the habitats themselves, often with detailed captions.

This double volume on the genus *Zygaena* is a great milestone in entomology! Not only have the authors succeeded in compiling everything that can be known about the individual species of this genus and creating a monumental work that is unparalleled, but they have also created a simply beautiful double book that will make the heart of every book lover leap. With a price of 300 €, the work is unfortunately not affordable for everyone, but for this money you get a wonderful compendium that is well worth the investment. Browsing through it and learning so many interesting details about these wonderful moths is a great pleasure for me all the time.

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