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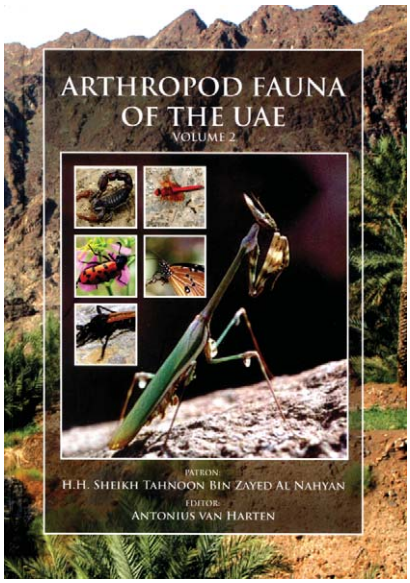
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BOOK REVIEW

'ARTHROPOD FAUNA OF THE UAE. Volume 2.' Patron H. H. Sheikh Tahnoon Bin Zayed Al Nahyan. Editor Antonius van Harten. Sharjah, United Arab Emirates: UAE Insect Project, 2009. 786 pp., 24+17 cm. Hardcover. ISBN 978-9948-15-090-9. Price: Europe – 42 Euro, Great Britain – 38 GBP, North America – 62 USD, other countries – 100 Dirhams. Available from: Dar Al Ummah Printing, P.O. Box 39975, Abu Dhabi, UAE; Fax: +971-2-6734766. Also obtainable from NHBS.

This book is the second volume of a series which was successfully initiated several years ago to cover the arthropod fauna of the United Arab Emirates.

The volume opens with a very useful list of georeferenced localities mentioned in the text, and a table reflecting the number of arthropod families collected in the UAE since the initiation of the project in 2004. The introduction also highlightes current achievements of the project and ways forward. The book represents a truly collective effort of 42 specialists from 18 countries. Such an approach has naturally resulted in a most impressive coverage of taxa. Of 63 families dealt with, 26 are recorded as new for the country, and a good number of taxa are described as new to science: four genera, one subgenus, 84 species, and two subspecies. In total, over 700 species are covered, with more than a half of them being new to the UAE. Frustratingly, the name of one tribe proposed in the coleopteran family Ptinidae (p. 180) is unavailable, not meeting requirements of the current International Code of Zoological Nomenclature (ICZN 1999).



Taxonomic chapters conform to the standard layout developed in the previous volume: a concise introduction is followed by a detailed systematic account for each family with relevant comments on the biology and distribution of species, and the necessary references; identification keys complement selected chapters. The chapters are generously illustrated, with over 360 full-colour plates in addition to 87 sets of black-and-white line-art drawings and photographs. Particularly noteworthy is the chapter on the Geometridae, in which the authors presents their analysis of mtDNA data from these moths. This approach provides a new insight into the geometrid diversity of the UAE and neighbouring countries.

The volume ends with two indexes, separately compiled for "taxonomic novelties" and for the generic and specific names of arthropod taxa.

The publication of two consecutive volumes of this size is a challenging task, and the editor, who was also responsible for the layout of the entire book, must have spent an enormous amount of time and considerable effort in making this volume look consistent and professionally produced. Unavoidably, a few insignificant errors have crept in, the most noticeable one probably being on p. 771, where the posterior view of the *Oestrus variolosus* larva is called frontal.

The patron of the project, H. H. Sheikh Tahnoon Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, should be acknowledged for his passionate support of this project. The present volume continues to show the amazing diversity of the arthropod fauna of the UAE, and is highly recommended to entomologists, as well as ecologists, conservation specialists, naturalists *etc*. In the preface to this volume, H. H. Sheikh Tahnoon Bin Zayed Al Nahyan expresses his "…hope that the work of Dr Antonius van Harten and his colleagues will lay a solid foundation for further research on insect faunal inventories, crop protection, and medically important insects". There is no doubt that we shall have a privilege to see further additions to this ambitious series before long.

M.B. Mostovski

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