

A Book Review of: Phasmida Species File. Catalogue of Stick and Leaf Insects of the World by Otte D. & Brock P. D

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A Book Review of:
Phasmida Species File. Catalogue of Stick and Leaf Insects of the World
by Otte D. & Brock P. D

414 S. 210x280 mm, ringbound. Published by the Insect Diversity Association, Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, 2005. ISBN 1-929014-08-2. Subscription price: US\$50, later US\$75. In English.

For almost 2 decades now the species of the insect order Phasmatodea—the stick insects and walking leaves—have attracted the interest of more and more enthusiasts. Many of them have engaged in taxonomic work, resulting in a considerable number of publications. But only 2 major publications, Bragg's 2001 "Phasmids of Borneo" and Zompro's 2004 "Revision of the Genera of the Areolatae" have dealt with the entire order. A catalogue, urgently required, was still missing. Otte and Brock have tried to fill this gap with the present work.

Considering the high price, high-quality book production should be expected, but a ring-bound collection of loose leaves is delivered. The cover became damaged after short use. This type of binding is unsuitable for a book that will be used often. The buyer is advised to cut and bind the book in a more suitable way.

On p. 2 the book is called a "second edition". This is misleading, as the so-called previous edition did not fulfill the requirements of article 8.6 of the International Rules of Zoological Nomenclature. A consequence is that all relevant taxonomic content must be dated 2005 and not 2003, as suggested in the introduction.

The authors stick to the grammatically incorrect term "Phasmida" instead of the correct term "Phasmatodea". Fortunately, the use of "Phasmida" is decreasing, and hopefully will not be encouraged by this book.

A considerable number of errors is corrected on a separate sheet of paper. This includes a link to a website, where in future corrections and additions are to be published. At the moment this site is offline. A more thorough editing of the manuscript would have been desirable, especially since the value of such a catalogue is defined by the correctness of its contents.

One chapter contains collections of references dealing with biogeographical regions. The basis of the selection of these references is not obvious: minor generic revisions stand beside an unpublished thesis and species lists of all groups of insects, while several important works are missing: a revision of nearctic phasmids (Diapheromerinae) (Zompro 1998) and another work dealing solely with this fauna (Helfer 1987: How to know the Grasshoppers, Cockroaches and their allies), can only be found in the section "General".

The sections "Type Catalogues", "Taxonomic Arrangement" and "List of Genera" appear well done, but the prominent rendering of self-creating tribal names, as for example, Necrosciini, the single tribe in the subfamily Necrosciinae, is confusing. In the section "Taxa Above the Level of Genus" almost all of the more recent important publications are absent, though some are mentioned on the separate leaf. In the main part "Genera and Species" there are many spelling mistakes such as "dulterina" instead of "adulterina" (p. 228). There is a lack of attention to formatting: *Athertonina* is placed as a valid genus under "T", instead of "A". And at a closer look it becomes obvious that this is a wrongly formatted synonym.

The weakest treatment concerns *Heteronemia*. Twenty-three species are listed in this genus, which actually belong to various other genera (*Pseudosermyle*, *Baculum*, etc.) and families (Heteronemiidae, Diapheromeridae, Phasmatidae): almost without exception their actual assignment has already been published in major revisory works.

The systematics of Phasmatodea are in flux, and the coming years will bring a considerable number of changes. Valuable as it is, this work is still premature, and considering the high price, cannot really be recommended. This assessment might change, when a second, thoroughly corrected edition, will (hopefully) be published.

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Corrigenda:

The Rytidochrotinae of Panama, with new species of *Hylopedetes* Rehn 1929, *Oedalacris* Descamps and Amedegnato 1972 and *Chiriquacris* n. gen. Journal of Orthoptera Research 14(1): 63-90.

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Corrections listed below have been incorporated into the pdf version available for download from BioOne. Sequence for each entry: ms location //error// instruction or correction.

p. 63, Title// **Amédégnato/Amedegnato**

p.70// "4 ♂♂, Prov. Bocas del Toro: Quebrada Felix, 2 km NW of summit of road to Chiriquí Grande 900m. 19–22.09.1999, 1997 . . . " // [Delete] '1997'.

p.71, Fig. 10 caption// " . . . reflected to the rear. Scale 1 mm." // [Delete] 'Scale 1 mm.'

p.76// "Dimensions.— see table." // " . . . see Table 2."

p.76// "Phallus (Figs 17E-G). Typical of subfamily. Lophi conical, slightly diverging, weakly soldered . . . " // " . . . weakly shouldered"

p.77// "Piezops Hebard 1923; Hebard 1923:296 . . . " // "Piezops Hebard 1923" [column-centered] "Hebard M. 1923:296 . . . " [at left margin below]

p.79// "Female: (Fig. 19) Similar to but much larger than male—see table of Dimensions— . . . " // " --see Table 3-- . . . "

p.82// "The aperture of the duct is supported by an arrowhead-shaped sclerite (Fig. 25C.) Dimensions: see table." // "Dimensions: see Table 4A."

p.84// " . . . Piper (Pothomorphe) peltatum (Spanish . . . ' // "Piper (Pothomorphe) peltatum . . . "

p.86, Table 1 Footnotes// "same in all spp." // "same in all spp."

p.86, Table 1 Footnote// "3 only punctatus is different" // "only punctatus is different"

p.86, Table 1 Footnote// "4 similar in all/OS bigger in females" // "similar in all spp., IOS bigger in females of all spp."

p.86, Table 1 Footnote// "5 here longer in males, in the others shorter" // "here longer in males in the other spp. shorter"

p.86, Table 1 Footnote// "6 FF similar in all" // "Foot Formula similar in all spp."

p.86, References// "Hebard M. 192. . . . " // "Hebard M. 1923. . . . "