

THE YPOMEUTINAE (LEPIDOPTERA) OF THE WORLD EXCLUSIVE OF THE AMERICAS

Gershenson Z. S., Ulenberg S. A. North-Holland, Amsterdam; Oxford; New York; Tokyo. K. Nederl. Akad. Wetensch., 1998. — 202 p.

Species richness of moths by far outnumber butterflies, but our knowledge of moths is limited and perhaps negatively correlated with the number of species. Not many new species of butterflies are expected to be collected and named, but the tie opposite is true for moths. Therefore, any updated comprehensive taxonomic work is very important and very much needed. This is particularly true for the book written by Zlata S. Gershenson and Sandrine A. Ulenberg, entitled "The Yponomeutinae (Lepidoptera) of the World exclusive of the Americas" and published by North-Holland, Amsterdam/Oxford/New York/Tokyo in 1998.

Yponomeutinae (subfamily of Yponomeutidae, Ermine moths) is rather a small taxonomic group distributed worldwide, but with higher species richness in the Northern hemisphere. The moths are small size with the wingspan up to 31 mm, but some of them (especially tropical ones) are beautifully colored with conspicuous spot patterns on the forewings. Their caterpillars were recorded so far from 23 widely distributed plant families, some of them might cause damage in apple and olives orchards, nurseries etc.

The book includes 231 species of ermine moths (subfamily Yponomeutinae) and updates our recent knowledge about their distribution, host plant, and taxonomic status. Unfortunately, the species living in Americas were excluded from the book. The book gives on 202 pages comprehensive information about the history of taxonomic research on the Yponomeutinae, morphological description of adults, larvae and pupae, biology, host plants, distribution, classification (key for genera classification is available also), and annotated list of species (species identification keys, and for each species information about synonymy, localization of types, distribution and information about period of imago activity). The figures of important (mostly genitalia) taxonomic characters are of very good quality, such as the plates with pictures of genitalia. Additional three plates are showing colored pictures of 63 species of ermine moths. The pictures are sharp and clear and it is only a pity, that not all annotated species were pictured. The print quality of the book is very high on very good paper.

The book will be certainly for many incoming years a basic source of information for ermine moths (subfamily Yponomeutidae) systematics, museums, moth collectors, gardeners, agronomists and general and evolutionary biologists since the group has proved a suitable model for host plant relationship study. It is recommended for each library dealing with the entomology and fauna of the world.

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