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BOOK REVIEW

WATT A.D., STORK N.E. & HUNTER M.D. (eds): FOREST AND INSECTS. Chapman & Hall, London etc., 1997, 406 pp. ISBN 0-412-79110-2. Price GBP 65.00.

The aim of the book was "to cover the full breadth of forest entomology". The editors aimed to bring together two groups of entomologists working in forests: Those concerned mainly with forest pest management, and those interested mainly in biodiversity. The book consists of 22 chapters, grouped into six parts. Most of the chapters were presented as papers during the 18th Symposium of the Royal Entomological Society in London in 1995. The chapters are only loosely connected, covering a wide range of topics and providing information on the latest advances in various branches of forest entomology. The six parts are named: 1. Colonization of trees by insects (2 chapters); 2. Temporal and spatial population ecology (5 chapters); 3. Insects in forest ecosystems (2 chapters); 4. Forest pests (4 chapters); 5. Insect diversity (6 chapters); 6. Insect conservation (3 chapters). The various geographical areas are also covered, from boreal mixed-wood forest to tropical rainforests in New Guinea. The method and approach differ between chapters, from spatially explicit analyses of populations to an overview of the herbivorous feeding on a particular tree genus.

In my view, the greatest advantage of this book is that it attempts to bring together two relatively isolated groups of entomologists: The classical forest entomologists, concerned mainly with the problems of insect impact on forests and pest management, and those interested mainly in insect diversity and conservation. As a consequence, the book does not form a coherent whole, but presents a selection of interesting topics, dealing with the relationships between insects, their host trees and forest environments. Also, the papers range from case studies (i.e., classical research papers) to critical reviews. Many papers include both, i.e., an extended review in the introduction, which is then illustrated by a case study. Also, the patterns and processes treated include top-down and bottom-up regulation in ecosystem control, effects of host specificity, effects of forest fragmentation on diversity and on particular processes, and of management practices on pest outbreaks. The book is a very useful source of research information, and provides a good selection of relevant topics in the area of forest entomology, but it is not a comprehensive reference or textbook. However, this was not the aim of the editors. The book should be present in all entomological research libraries.

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