

BOOK REVIEW

SABROSKY W.C.: FAMILY-GROUP NAMES IN DIPTERA AND BIBLIOGRAPHY. MYIA, Vol. 10, North American Dipterists' Society. Backhuys Publishers, Leiden, 1999, 584 pp. ISBN 90-5782-026-9. Price USD 95.00.

The late Curtis W. Sabrosky (1910–1997) had continuously worked on this text for more than 60 years, practically his whole scientific life, beginning in 1938 at the 7th International Congress of Entomology in Berlin. All the references cited in the book (except for a few as mentioned by the author) have been examined personally by Curtis Sabrosky, so errors in the spellings of the names, in authorship and dates are almost excluded. Even the author says in the Preface that “any errors or omissions will be few and insignificant” (compared with previously published bibliographical data). As I knew Curtis Sabrosky personally, this means the present Catalog is undoubtedly perfect. This can be documented by the fact that, when writing this book, Curtis Sabrosky had requested the present author to find in Prague a practically unknown and completely forgotten journal from the beginning of 19th century as there was one family name mentioned. I still do not know where he could find that source.

After a very concise and clear Introduction with explanations to the arrangement of the book and its history, four independent alphabetical lists are presented. First a “Conspectus” (pp. 21–33) listing type genera of the currently recognized dipteran families, approximately 1,900 names. The second list represents the basis of the book (pp. 35–326), the “Annotated Catalog of

Family-Group Names” arranged by type genus, included are even typographic errors. Third, the so-called “Supplemental List” (pp. 327–360) listing family group names not based on generic names. The last part of the book is the “Bibliography”, giving full references including precise dating and annotations (if necessary) of 2,982 cited works. The bibliography was finalized by three authors, F.C. Thompson, N.L. Evenhuis, and C.W. Sabrosky.

This admirable publication is completed by a list of “Abbreviations used for Serial Publications” (pp. 557–574), a very valuable list of natural history periodicals and their abbreviations, especially useful for editors of biological publications. As given truthfully in the Postscript on p. 575, this work represents the largest, most comprehensive and detailed study of family names ever published. It also clearly demonstrates the extraordinarily high level of dipterology compared with other groups of insects and also the many years of devoted work of Curtis Sabrosky in the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature. Of course, the taxonomy and systematics of all groups in zoology are currently developing and this applies also to dipterology. Several new families have been erected during last years that are not included, though their names in the sub-family or tribal rank are always available under the corresponding type genus.

Really an enormous work of life of Curtis W. Sabrosky. We only deeply regret that the author has not lived to see this monumental work being printed.

M. Chvála