

BOOK REVIEW

CZECHOWSKI W., RADCHENKO A. & CZECHOWSKA W.: THE ANTS (HYMENOPTERA, FORMICIDAE) OF POLAND. Museum and Institute of Zoology Polish Academy of Sciences, Warszawa, 2002, pp. 200 + 1 Table. ISBN 83-85192-98, price USD 25.

Ants are a widespread and abundant group of social insects and play an important role in many ecosystem processes. Consequently the study of ant ecology and social way of life is very popular. The three authors of this book are specialists in various fields of myrmecology: Taxonomy, zoogeography, ecology and sociobiology, which guarantees the reliability of their work. The book presents an annotated list of Polish ants, a brief description of their ecology, geographic distribution and identification keys to workers, queens and males of Polish ants. The faunistic section presents an overview of the literature data on the Polish ants. The list of species is accompanied by a list of the most frequently used synonyms for each species and all the synonyms used in Polish myrmecological literature. The taxonomic position of disputed species and those designated recently is eluci-

dated in great detail in brief notes. This helps greatly as the nomenclature may eventually change in some cases.

The notes on the ecology of individual ant species and information about their geographical distribution are valuable. Each species is accompanied by a map of its geographic range and a detailed map of its distribution in Poland. The maps of the distributions in Poland are based on a division of Poland into individual geographic regions. I personally prefer quadrant mapping, which I believe illustrates the distribution of species and our present knowledge about them more effectively, however I realize there are historical reasons for this form of presentation. The book also presents an ecological classification of Polish ants based on their ecological plasticity and habitat requirements. The key for the identification of adults of Polish ants is accompanied by black and white illustrations.

In general, the book is a comprehensive and useful source of information for specialists in the taxonomy, faunistics, and ecology of ants, not only in Poland, but also in other Central European countries.

J. Frouz