BOOK REVIEW

AMIET F., HERRMANN M., MÜLLER A. & NEUMEYER R.: FAUNA HELVETICA 9. APIDAE 4 (Anthidum, Chelostoma, Coelioxys, Dioxys, Heriades, Lithurgus, Megachile, Osmia & Stelis). Centre suisse de cartographie de la faune (CSCF), Neuchâtel, 2004, 272 pp., 249 figs, 117 distrib. maps. ISSN 1422-6367. Hb: ISBN 2-88414-021-2. Price CHF 45.00.

AMIET F., HERRMANN M., MÜLLER A. & NEUMEYER R.: FAUNA HELVETICA 20. APIDAE 5 (Ammobates, Ammobatoides, Anthophora, Biastes, Ceratina, Dasypoda, Epeoloides, Epeolus, Eucera, Macropis, Melecta, Melitta, Nomada, Pasites, Tetralonia, Thyreus, Xylocopa). Centre suisse de cartographie de la faune (CSCF), Neuchâtel, 2007, 356 pp., 423 figs, 142 distrib. maps. ISSN 1422-6367. Hb: ISBN 978-2-88414-032-4. Price CHF 50.00.

These books are parts the well-known series Fauna Helvetica. Previous three volumes were published between 1996–2001. I had the pleasure of reviewing the 2nd and 3rd volumes of this perfect series for the European Journal of Entomology. Now, there are two additional volumes, the 4th and 5th.

The volumes currently being reviewed are similar in conception the former volumes. They are written in two languages: German and French, and each consists of chapters on many bee genera. In the 4th volume – *Anthidum*, *Chelostoma*, *Coelioxys*, *Dioxys*, *Heriades*, *Lithurgus*, *Megachile*, *Osmia* and *Stelis* belonging to the family Megachilidae and in the 5th volume – *Ammobates*, *Ammobatoides*, *Anthophora*, *Biastes*, *Ceratina*, *Dasypoda*, *Epeoloides*, *Epeolus*, *Eucera*, *Macropis*, *Melecta*, *Melitta*, *Nomada*, *Pasites*, *Tetralonia*, *Thyreus* and *Xylocopa*. These genera belong to the family Apidae (previously Anthophoridae) and Melittidae (recently partly Dasypodaidae).

The chapters are divided as in the previous volumes. There is a general chapter on bee morphology followed by chapters on individual genera. Those on each genus are divided in a section on the biology of the genus, identification key with detailed figures of some characters, taxonomic classification of species and commentary on the individual species (description of females and males, distribution of each species with a map of the records for Switzerland, flight period, cleptoparasites or host and additional notices). The records are graphically presented as recent or old (before 1970). In the 5th volume, the recent records are further categorised as before of after 1990. At the end of each book there are references and a species index.

The keys are well constructed. They are suitable for identification by beginners. The identification keys are constructed as a sensu lato; for example, the *Osmia* key includes species of several other supraspecific taxons (*Hoplosmia*, *Hoplitis*, *Metallinella*, *Neosmia*, *Protosmia*, *Erythrosmia* and *Tergosmia*). I prefer identification keys that branch according to supraspecific diagnoses. Such keys can be used partially for identification of non-included species, too. However, I appreciate the point of view of the authors. The identification of bees is difficult because of the many sibling or similar species. Their identification is important for their protection and study of their biology. Thus, the question of taxonomy is secondary importance. Moreover, apidologists differ in the opinions on the taxonomy.

I would like to draw particular attention to the key for the genus *Nomada*. This genus comprises a lot of species and their identification is complicated. The authors use typical and obvious characters in their differential diagnosis.

Let me congratulate the authors on such perfect work. Many thanks for it! I recommend these books to everybody who is interested in bees, not only specialists. These books should be present in every biological library to support the beginners in the study of bees. I am looking forward to other volumes, especially that on the genus *Andrena*.

The books can be ordered at the following address: Centre suisse de cartographie de la faune (CSCF), Passage Maximilien-de-Meuron 6, CH-2000 Neuchâtel, Switzerland.

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