

BOOK REVIEW

FAN ZIDE (ED.), CHEN ZHIZI, FANG JIANMING, ZHENG SHENSHENG & TAO ZHENLIANG: *DIPTERA: CALLIPHORIDAE. FAUNA SINICA (INSECTA VOL. 6)*. Science Press, Beijing, 1997, 707 pp. ISBN 7-03-005163-7/Q.633. In Chinese, with a 52-page English summary. Price RMB 116.00.

The blowflies (Calliphoridae) are a large, cosmopolitan family of flies, mostly stoutly built and of moderate size. They are rather ubiquitous day fliers, although a few species appear in the light traps. They are strongly attracted to moisture and feed mainly on nectar, honeydew and on other sweet liquids including products of organic decomposition that provide proteins essential for the egg maturation; reproduction is oviparous or ovoviviparous. Their population densities may occasionally reach plague proportions. Blowflies are known as domestic nuisances (synanthropes), are important vectors of certain diseases, and cause considerable losses in the food industry. They play an important role in forensic entomology as decomposers of unburied corpses, and partly also in medicine as the cause of animal and human myiasis.

The present volume is a revision of the family Calliphoridae in China, and consists of two parts: general and systematic. The general part includes the introduction, diagnoses of taxa, histori-

cal research review, a proposal of within-family classification, and chapters dealing with morphology, life history, economic importance, pest control and rearing methods. The authors define 11 subfamilies and 27 tribes that have been in part proposed on the basis of phylogenetic (cladistic) analysis. Three tribes, one subgenus and eleven species are described as new. Although the book is written in Chinese (pp. 1–615), the English summary comprises fifty two pages (pp. 625–677) and includes detailed identification keys and diagnoses of newly described taxa. Moreover, the species diagnoses are accompanied by 225 sketches of both larval and imaginal taxonomic characters, with focus on details of imaginal chaetotaxy and the genitalia of both sexes. The Latin names of taxa, synonymies, references to literature, information included in the summary, and the tabular overview of distribution of individual species (232 altogether) in the provinces of China enable the reader to get a good picture of blowflies of China. This makes the book extremely attractive and useful, since its confrontation with the comparable monographs of this family for the neighbouring countries provides rather complete information on both Palaearctic and Oriental blowfly fauna of East Asia. The authors should be congratulated on their long-term effort.

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