

CATALOGUE OF THE DIPTERA OF THE AFROTROPICAL REGION, edited by R. W. Crosskey, *et al.* 1980. British Museum (Natural History), London, England. 1437 pp., L 55 (= \$135).

The *Catalogue of the Diptera of the Afrotropical Region* is the latest in a cycle of regional dipteran catalogs and is the best of its gender. *A Catalog of the Diptera of America North of Mexico* (Stone *et al.* 1965) started the cycle, followed by *A Catalogue of the Diptera of the Americas South of the United States* (Papavero 1966—1987) and *A Catalog of the Diptera of the Oriental Region* (Delfinado and Hardy 1973-1977). A catalog of the Diptera of the Palaearctic Region is in preparation (Soos) and one for the Australian Region is being planned (Steffan). The afrotropical catalog covers the dipteran fauna of Africa south of the Sahara (=Ethiopian Region) and includes 95 families, 2,009 genera, 16,318 species, and some 4,200 references.

These catalogs were and are written by specialists under the direction of an editor or editorial group. The afrotropical catalog was prepared by 40 specialists under the editorial guidance of R. W. Crosskey (ed.) and the other dipterists of the British Museum (Natural History) (B. H. Cogan, P. Freeman, A. C. Pont, K. G. V. Smith, and H. Oldroyd, *asst. eds.*). The accuracy and quality of the taxonomic data in these catalogs are the responsibilities of the specialists. Contributors to the afrotropical catalog are qualified dipterists and are usually either the best or among the best specialists for their respective groups. However, some great authorities are absent (Alexander: Tipulidae, Tanyderidae, and Ptychopteridae; Spencer: Agromyzidae; Maa: Hippoboscidae, Nycterbiidae, and Streblidae; Zumpt: Calliphoridae and Sarcophagidae).

The style and format of the various catalogs differ, but they all provide the same basic data: all generic and specific names are listed with the source of their original publication; for generic names the type-species, mode of fixation, and source of that fixation when subsequent to the original publication; for specific names, the original genus when it is different from the present one, and an indication of the type-locality; for genera and higher taxa, pertinent references to their taxonomy and biology (In the afrotropical catalog, the latter references are cited in the introduction to each family. Although this format is consistent throughout the catalog, it is not as convenient as would be their inclusion with the appropriate taxon, and many will find it useful to annotate where data are available.); and for species, their distributions. Where these catalogs differ is in the amount of supplemental data. The maximal amount of supplemental data is found in some fascicles of the neotropical catalog, and the minimal amount is found in the oriental catalog. The amount in the afrotropical catalog represents a useful compromise between the extremes. The afrotropical catalog does not give detailed type-localities for specific names, as in the neotropical and oriental catalogs, nor is there supplemental information on hosts, biology, type-depositories, etc., as in some fascicles of the neotropical catalog. The afrotropical

catalog does include a detailed and comprehensive bibliography, which is lacking in the oriental catalog. The extra data in the neotropical and oriental catalogs are useful, but their collection required considerable time. The lack of these data in the afrotropical catalog is a justified trade-off for timeliness. The detailed and comprehensive bibliography is, however, essential. The abbreviated and sometimes cryptic notation used for the publication source in the oriental catalog, the only catalog without a separate bibliography, can be difficult, if not impossible, to understand (cf. the source given for the genus *Medetera* (Dolichoopodidae) in the various catalogs).

The bibliography in the afrotropical catalog is clearly superior to all its predecessors. While its format closely follows that of the nearctic catalog, it differs in providing full titles. However, we noted two deficiencies: one title (Audouin *et al.*) was copied from the nearctic catalog despite the statement that all references were checked (pp. 15, 889) and the other is de Villiers (1789), which is listed as "Villiers" despite statements to the contrary (pp. 20, 889) and without cross references.

A useful addition to the bibliography is a list of the full names of the cited authors. The list contains the names of 957 workers, with full names for about three-fourths of them. An appendix follows the list of names and includes additional data published while the main catalog was in press. This appendix extends somewhat the stated cut-off data (31 July 1978) for the coverage, as some 1979 references are given.

Only a few typographical errors were noticed, the most serious being on page 734, where the junior homonym *maculipennis* Emden is renamed as both *spincosata* Pont (p. 734) and *emdeni* Pont (p. 735), with *spincosata* also being used as a new name for *spincosata* Emden (p. 734).

One innovation in the afrotropical catalog needs comment. The editor decided to do without (p. 18) "parentheses around the names of authors of species that are no longer in their original genera" on the grounds that this is considered one of the "most negative" and "useless requirements" of the *Code*. The editor argued that "parentheses around authors' names are . . . redundant." We applaud this decision to forgo the bracketing convention.

The blue, leatherlike plastic binding, with gold lettering is attractive and is probably more durable than the cloth bindings of some of its predecessors. Page size of all these catalogs is similar, but the afrotropical catalog has been most efficient in its use of it. With a smaller, but no less readable typography, more species are treated per page (11.7) than in the other catalogs (nearctic-9.9; oriental-8.3; and neotropical-7.4).

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