

Review—New Zealand insects and their story

SHARELL, R. 1982: *New Zealand insects and their story*. Revised edition. Auckland, Collins. 268 p. + 44 plates with 199 colour photographs. ISBN 0-000-216530-9. Price: NZ\$29.95

It is a pleasure to find that Richard Sharell's attractive book is again available to naturalists. This is a book noted for its magnificent photographs, mainly of our larger insects. Members of the Entomological Society will be aware that 3 photographs from this book were chosen to be printed as postcards available through the Society (red admiral, puriri moth, and Helms' stag beetle). Complementing the photographs is enthusiastic text written in a popular style describing the life-histories and behaviour of the insects. Entomologists know that some of the information recorded within the book are firsts for New Zealand, such as the recording of a "ticking" sound for the Stephens' Island weta, *Deinacrida rugosa* (p. 139).

This edition is printed on a whiter paper than that of the 1971 edition. As a consequence, some photographs are enhanced, such as the puriri moth (figure 63), whereas others, such as the convolvulus moth (figure 107), are perhaps not quite so striking. The black and white photographs seem to be better on this whiter paper; for example, the wetas on pages 136 and 137 are better reproduced than the 1971 edition. All the photographs are identical with the 1971 edition.

The changes made to the text are small, and most are concerned with updating nomenclature (e.g., *Vanessa* to *Bassaris* for the admiral butterflies) or statements of fact (e.g., page 114, where the number of cicada species in Australia is changed from "1,200 to 1,500" to "between two and three hundred", and p. 115, where the songs for the cicadas *Amphipsalta cingulata* and *A. zelandica* are reversed). There is one significant change in the text, where 30 lines on page 129 are rewritten (on Orthoptera). Unfortunately, this has introduced an error in that the top 4 lines of page 129 (reset) duplicate the final 4 lines of page 128 above the footnote. Some spelling mistakes of the first edition still remain: e.g., on page 167 the mosquito genus *Culex* is given as *Cales*; on page 158 tachinid flies is spelt tachanid; on page 214 native is spelt uative; page 70 Geometridae is spelt Geomitridae (hyphenated); page 107 weevils is spelt weeviiis; and on page 178 advising on the treatment of bee stings 2 words are mis-spelt on the same line—"not at once forthcomig, dilute wiskey". Only 2 new references are added in the Addendum. One of these is Dr Gibbs' book on New Zealand butterflies; unfortunately, on page 217 a 1971 remark is not updated to state that this book is now a reality.

Now some words for the publishers. I was disappointed that the typesetting for the reset lines did not match the rest of the text as well as might be expected: the letters are a larger point size, giving reset lines a darker appearance, and the lines are set about half a letter wider (check paragraph 3, page 130). I was able to see that the total text reset was 157 lines made up in 35 correction blocks for 32 pages (excluding the new setting for "Note to Second Edition", "Addendum", and "Index"). The author states on page 22 that "This edition has been slightly revised", yet the words on the cover, "new and revised edition", imply that substantial changes have been made. In my opinion it would be fairer to describe this as a "limp cover edition" that is a reprint of the 1971 edition with minor amendments.

At the outset I said it was a pleasure to see this book available again. It is the type of book which should be in every library in New Zealand. Further, I recommend it without reservation to everyone who does not already possess a copy of the 1971 edition as the photographs alone are worth the price. If you are already a possessor of the 1971 edition then I consider you should examine the 1982 version very carefully before buying, as you may feel that the changes to the text are insufficient to justify the expense of having another copy.

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