

Litteratur

FÆSTER, K. (†) und K. HAMMER. 1970. Systematik der Mittel- und Nordeuropäischen *Bombus* und *Psithyrus* (Hym. Apidae). Ent. Meddr. 38, 257—302.

The true bumble bees, genus *Bombus* Latreille, and the cuckoo bumble bees, genus *Psithyrus* Lepeletier, constitute a taxonomic difficult assemblage of species most of which are subject to great variations in the colouring of the coat. Therefore the paper to be reviewed, mainly providing new keys (35 pp.), is indeed read with great interest.

Generally speaking the classification of the large genus *Bombus* in named subgenera has during several decades been accepted. The subgeneric division, originally founded on groups whose males possessed similar genitalia, has greatly facilitated the understanding of the interrelationships of the species. It has moreover been fortunate that construction of keys to either one of the sexes allows presentation of relationship (by keying out the subgenera with subsequent separation of the species) without interfering with the main purpose for a key: the quickest way of identification to the species.

The manuscript of the present paper was almost finished by the senior author Fæster before he died, and in the introduction the junior author points out that only very few alterations have been made. Fæster refuses to use the subgenera and prefers the less rigorous "species groups" which just is a matter of choice in those cases where he synonymizes the terms. *Hortorum*-group=*Hortobombus* Vogt, *terrestris*-group=*Bombus* s.s., *lapidarius*-group=*Lapidariobombus* Vogt, etc. However, the author disputes the subgenera as well-defined systematic units, primarily insisting that the male genitalia are overestimated as taxonomic characters. His point of view interferes with the elementary principles of taxonomy of which classification, founded on selected structural features that are associated with homologous parts, is of vital importance. A result of the insufficient taxonomic knowledge is the designations of species-groups individually comprising species removed from different well-defined subgenera. The most striking example is the "*lapponicus*-group" consisting of two species, viz. *B. (Pyrobombus) lapponicus* (Fabricius) and *B. (Alpinobombus) alpinus* (Linnaeus). Even though Fæster (p. 265) emphasizes the strict differences in the male genitalia, he still claims a close relationship between the two species on other premises: (1) the females are separated from all other species by the same and stable colouring of the abdominal coat; (2) the females are morphologically closely related and almost impossible to distinguish. The statement does not hold due to the fact that (1) the nominate subspecies of *B. lapponicus*, presenting a variable colouring of the abdominal coat always different from that of *B. alpinus*, is disregarded; (2) the females of *B. lapponicus* and *B. alpinus* are easily distinguished by a number of morphological characters as for instance malar space, details in the mandible, several microsculptural differences, etc. Even the smaller workers of those species are easily distinguished.

It is made a key to the species-groups in which both sexes are treated simultaneously. In subsequent keys to the females and the males respectively, some species can be determined while others not because stable diagnostic characters have not been considered. *B. humilis* Illiger (the authors use the junior name *B. variabilis* Schmiedeknecht) for instance, keyed out several times by details in the variable colouring of the coat, is easily confused with *B. pascuorum* (Scopoli) (the authors use the junior synonym *B. agrorum* (Fabricius)) which also displays a wide range of colour variations (p. 281). The key to the males are particularly difficult to use because the genitalia (easily pulled out for examination) for principal reasons are omitted, and variable details in the branching and the colouring of hairs have repeatedly been used as diagnostic characters.

B. arcticus diabolicus Friese (= *B. alpiniformis* Richards) is not separated from *B. alpinus* (p. 285), neither have *B. lucorum* and *B. magnus* Vogt (p. 286) been distinguished from *B. terrestris* (Linnaeus). Several species are not at all considered as for instance *B. pyre-*

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naeus (Pérez), *B. inexpectatus* Tkalcu, *B. patagiatus* Nylander, *B. semenoviellus* Skorikov, etc.

Several striking morphological characters in addition to the male genitalia are disregarded in the keys to the female and male *Psithyrus* spp.

Most of the drawings are instructive and the erroneous indication of sulcus obliquus (Fig. 2 d) must be a slip of the pen as the corresponding text (p 261) is correct.

The good intention to construct more useful keys than for instance those appearing in O. Schmiedeknecht, 1930: Die Hymenopteren Nord- und Mitteleuropas, mentioned in the short list of references, has unfortunately failed. Apparently, the available collections have not been representative for the entire Central- and Northern Europe, and neither have taxonomic papers presented during the last decades been consulted. In that case the authors would surely have paid more attention to qualitative diagnostic characters and updated the nomenclature as well.

Astrid Löken

A short history of the Brown-Tail Moth by WILLIAM CURTIS 1782. With an Introduction by T. STERN and Entomological Notes by D. S. FLETCHER.

Facsimile Reprint 1969. E. W. Classey Ltd, Middlesex, England. Pris 3 pund 15 shilling.

Boken, som ingår i en ny serie kallad »Classica Entomologica», utgöres av 3 från varandra helt fristående delar. Första delen är en kort biografi över W. Curtis och avslutas med en litteratursammanställning av biografiska arbeten om W. Curtis. Den efterföljande andra delen, som är författad av D. S. Fletcher, behandlar *Euproctis chrysorrhoea*'s taxonomiska status. Dessutom redogör Fletcher för utbredning, skadegörelse i gamla och nya världen och hur arten bekämpas. Tredje delen slutligen är W. Curtis' klassiska studie över äpplerödsgumpens biologi med åtföljande färgplansch.

Det hela ger ett sobert intryck och förlaget är att gratulera. Boken rekommenderas till alla som är intresserade av den klassiska entomologiska litteraturen. Här är nämligen en chans att berika sitt bibliotek med ett arbete som är svårt att få på antikvarisk väg.

Karl-Johan Hedqvist

Nordens nattflyn

En rättelselapp är tryckt och kommer att ligga i boken under utsändandet till bokhandlarna. Skulle någon av de första köparna sakna denna rättelselapp i sin bok, går det bra att hämta den i bokhandeln eller efter hänvändelse till undertecknad.

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