

РОССИЙСКАЯ АКАДЕМИЯ НАУК  
Южный научный центр

RUSSIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES  
Southern Scientific Centre



# Кавказский Энтомологический Бюллетень

CAUCASIAN ENTOMOLOGICAL BULLETIN

Том 16. Вып. 2

Vol. 16. No. 2



Ростов-на-Дону  
2020

**Book review: Dubi Benyamini, Eddie John. “Butterflies of the Levant and nearby areas Southern Turkey, Cyprus, Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Jordan, Egypt, Sinai & NW Saudi Arabia. Vol. II. Papilionidae Pieridae Hesperidae”. Beit-Arye, 4D MicroRobotics Ltd., 2020. 208 p. ISBN 978-965-92822-0-3**

In the northern hemisphere Dubi Benyamini's name sounds familiar for lepidopterists. In connection with the Palaearctic fauna he is known in researching the life history of many species, for example the enigmatic *Iolana alferii* Wiltshire, 1948. He also discovered some new taxa. The most notable is the lycaenid butterfly *Pseudophilotes jordanicus* Benyamini, 2000. But in the southern part of the globe he is also known by the monograph of the Nabokov's Blue life histories published in his “Synopsis of Biological Studies of the Chilean Polyommata”, and further extensive article series on the Chilean butterfly and skipper fauna. And again: his name can be attributed to the discovery of more than twenty Neotropical Lycaenidae species new to science.

Few know, however, that Mr. Benyamini founded the Israeli Lepidopterists' Society in 1983, he has been organizing meetings national and international conferences, editing and publishing the News of the society ever since. In that meetings and periodical myriads of shorter or longer studies were presented on a wide variety of species, which inhabit the diverse habitats of the Middle East. He also produced a field guide of the Israeli butterflies. That book has had already seven editions. And he is the pioneer of butterfly gardening in Israel, too. All of these have so far can only be read in modern Hebrew, in Ivrit.

On the other hand, the book series Mr. Benyamini launched in this year will provide all his Near East findings collected during more than half-century of lepidopterological activity to the readers in English. The way he is doing this is not just simple and grand, but impressive and novel in many aspects. The book grossly diverges from other butterfly publications can be found on the market. Let's see this briefly via far-flung remarks in three entries: layout, text and figures.

The layout is elegant. The format is slightly larger than A4 (21 cm × 29.5 cm). All the information in the pages is arranged in two columns, which provides for the whole book a good tempo and rhythm. The exceptions are the opening pages of the main chapters, which are divided by full page photographs and the mosaic-like life-cycle illustrations. All these refresh the book and give new élan for the reader to keep the volume in hands and continue to explore.

The text is extremely well written and edited, thanks to the co-author Eddie John. The main chapters are: Contents (pp. 7–19), Papilionidae (pp. 20–55), Pieridae (pp. 56–125), Hesperidae (pp. 126–181). At the end there is glossary, list of abbreviations (pp. 182–183), systematic list (pp. 184–185) and list of references and selected bibliography. One of the gems is given on page nine where we have a splendid and eloquent preface from the California University Professor Art Shapiro, whose mystic humor radiates through the lines. All the species are discussed by the same manner: there is always a short opening essay which presents the targeted species, then biology (in subtitles flight period, life history, parasitoids, recorded hostplants) and distribution are discussed. Enormous quantity of information is given, all of them are based on evidences of recent observations, if not, there are always precise references to the source. I give myself no space to enter into details here, but I cannot avoid the temptation to highlight the chapters “*Papilio machaon* × *Papilio saharae*” and “The [Muschampia] hieromax (Hemming, 1932) complex in the Levant”. Both of them are typical “dubiada”: going into smallest life-history details, performing correlations, gaining the good conclusions.

And the figures: How charming and well composed is the triptichon on page four! The reader is taken to the highest range of the Levant region, to the snowy and fresh alpine meadows of the Anti-Lebanon, then descending via a dry *Pinus* forest of the Hatay and arriving to the deepest place of the Earth, the saline Dead Sea coast. This is really a fine composition. When you know that the designer of the book is Leah Benyamini, who is a highly skilled artist, you are not surprised. What a grand idea is that in the case of every family, there is a graph showing the species flight periods by months and presenting the life-cycles all the species in parallel running images of eggs, caterpillars and chrysalids! We have updated distribution maps, images of typical habitats with mounted museum specimens, and full documentation of life stages, hostplants and behaviour – all through photographs taken in nature.

What is also unusual aspect of this book is for having first the second part of a series planned in four volumes. But the reason is well explained on page 15. If you are interested to know this and want to face all the details, or just you want to have a profound monograph on The Wider Levant and its Butterflies, you have to get an own copy. I am sure that you will be satisfied. I repeat: there is no similar book on the market dealing Palaearctic butterflies and skippers, it is simple but grand, impressive and novel.

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Received / Поступила: 30.11.2020  
Published online / Опубликовано онлайн: 28.12.2020