

BOOK REVIEW

AMIET F., HERRMANN M., MÜLLER A. & NEUMEYER R.: FAUNA HELVETICA 6. APIDAE 3 (HALICTUS, LASIOGLOSSUM). Centre suisse de cartographie de la faune (CSCF), Neuchâtel, 2001, 208 pp., 250 figs, 96 distrib. maps. ISSN 1422-6367. Hb: ISBN 2-88414-017-4. Price CHF 45.00.

In 1999, I wrote that the works of the mentioned authors are important for the exact identification of bee species (Apoidea) from Central Europe, including alpine species. These works are three identification keys with perfect illustrations. The book, that is currently being reviewed, is the third book in this series. The first book was on the bumble bees and cuckoo-bumble bees (Bombini); the second on the families Colletidae and Halictidae (excluding the genera *Lasioglossum* and *Halictus*). In my last review I mentioned that the identification of these two large genera is difficult and a key to them in the "Fauna Helvetica" series was needed. I can say with pleasure that this book contains that key!

The book is written in two languages again: German and French, and consists of two chapters one on *Halictus* and the other on *Lasioglossum*. Each chapter includes the following: **a) introduction** - the general morphology of the genus, the number of species living in Switzerland, and remarks about the compilation and structure of the key; **b) descriptive biology** of the genus; **c) identification key** illustrated with original pen-and-ink drawings numbered for easy orientation; **d) supraspecific classification** of the genus is presented at the end of the key; the last part **e) commentary on individual species** at the end of each chapter contains the species names, the author and the date of each description, the most essential synonyms, morphology of a female and a male, the species' distribution in the

palaearctic region and in Switzerland. The active period, cuckoo bee, remarks on bionomy and subspecific taxonomy are listed if known. The distribution of the species in Switzerland is figured on maps with records before- and after 1970 differently designated. Remarks on rareness and endangered species (e.g. "häufig", "verbreitet aber nicht häufig" or "selten") are absent, unlike the previous keys. The references and a species index are at the end of the book. In contrast to the second book, the French part is separated from German part. The margins of the sheets in the French part are marked with a gray band that is apparent in side view and makes for easy orientation of the book.

The key structure and the characters are so well chosen that also student can use this key. The structure of the key follows the subgeneric classification, which facilitates the understanding of the supraspecific relations among individual species groups and emphasizes the differential characters of these groups. Diagnoses are mainly brief but very exact! Even some "sibling species" are well differentiated. The male genitalia in the genera *Lasioglossum* and *Halictus* is complicated in structure. However, in spite of this, the drawings are exactly figured!

What to say? Let me congratulate the authors on such perfect work! I recommend this book to every person interested in bees and not only specialists. This book should be present in every biological library to support and initiate young students in the study of bees.

The book can be ordered at the following address: Centre suisse de cartographie de la faune (CSCF/SZKF), Terreaux 14, CH-2000 Neuchâtel, Switzerland.

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