

BOOK REVIEWS

Brignoli, P. M. 1983. A Catalogue of the Araneae Described between 1940 and 1981. P. Merrett, ed. Manchester Univ. Press, Manchester M139PL, U. K. and Dover, New Hampshire 03820, U. S. A. \$90.00, 755 pages.

This book's checklist of families serves as a reminder of the many recent changes in spider taxonomy. For example, the cribellate-ecribellate distinction is no longer evident and many newly characterized families are present. The work that follows will be a welcome reference for systematists engaged in such research and for others wishing a complete list of all spider families and genera and of the new species described and the nomenclatural changes made since 1940. Following an introduction in which the limits, coverage, and organization of the work are explained, Brignoli comments on nomenclatural and systematical procedures and problems associated with taxonomic publications. Throughout the volume he continues to offer the benefit of his experience with spider taxonomy and taxonomic literature by including short notes on the history, placement, and spelling of taxa whose status is other than routine.

The book follows the scheme of Roewer's *Katalog der Araneae*, giving first a bibliography divided by year and then a catalog with families phylogenetically arranged. A systematic index appears at the front of the volume and an alphabetical generic index at the back, the latter making this catalog compatible with Bonnet's *Bibliographia Araneorum*. The volume is brought up to date by a 58-page, 1979-80 bibliographic and systematic addendum that shares the generic index. Like Roewer, Brignoli omits fossil taxa and introduces a *nomen novum* when he discovers a homonym.

Under each of the 96 families are listed: 1. genera for which no new species have been described since 1940, 2. genera that have been transferred to other families, 3. genera that are now junior synonyms, 4. new species that have been placed in synonymy or homonymy, and 5. genera containing new species or subspecies. Subfamilies are recognized in 13 families, but in the remainder, genera are listed alphabetically. The species of large, widely distributed genera are first geographically divided and then, like those of smaller genera, listed alphabetically. Each species and subspecies entry includes: 1. the sexes known, 2. the author and date of publication, 3. the page on which its description begins, 4. figure references, 5. an indication of whether the citation refers to a complete description or a less complete account such as a generic transfer, 6. the sex of type specimen(s), and 7. the country from which the species was collected. In the case of the United States and Russia, disjunct territories such as Alaska and Caucasus are so designated.

The need for this work is supported by the fact that each of its 104 bibliographic pages contains about 20 entries and each of its 600 catalog pages lists an average of about 16 new species. The thoroughness and organization it achieves will facilitate research and help reduce errors in spider systematics and, by so doing, contribute to advances in all areas of spider biology.

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