

Book Reviews

ZOOLOGY

Goodbye Bugs: A practical guide to coping with insects in the great outdoors

By Alan West and Bev Smallman. 1983. Grosvenor House Press, Toronto/Montreal. 144 pp. \$8.95.

This useful little book is intended as a layman's guide to dealing with pest or nuisance insects in Canada and the northern United States. Though the emphasis is on insects encountered during outdoor activities, many of the more common household pests such as flour beetles and cockroaches are also considered.

The book begins by educating the reader about the types of insects likely to be encountered and the general principles of insect control. From there, the authors move on to deal with specific insects, providing in each case a description of their habits and life history, and in light of these, the most effective means of dealing with them. In the case of insects in the out of doors this advice generally comes down to 'protect yourself', while indoors (cottages, tents, etc.) the common-sense solutions such as proper screens as well as repellents and other sprays are the ones most often recommended.

The very real dangers of severe reactions to insect bites and the possibilities of transmitted diseases are also treated in detail. In particular, the authors emphasize the importance of prompt action in these cases.

Written in a very relaxed style, the book is not only informative but also entertaining. As one would expect in a book of this nature, the use of jargon has been kept to a minimum and in no instances were terms left unexplained.

Perhaps the greatest service the book provides is the psychological reassurance it gives. Armed with this book the reader will feel more at ease in the outdoors and, while there is still not much he can do about the hordes of mosquitoes and their like, he at least will know the why's and how's of what they do and why they do it.

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Biology of Desert Invertebrates

By Clifford S. Crawford. 1981. Springer-Verlag, Berlin, Heidelberg, New York. xvi + 314 pp., illus. U. S. \$39.30.

Deserts and desert invertebrates have received increasing attention from biologists over the years as man's activities result in increasing desertification in many areas of the world, and as the fascinating details of the biology of desert life are unveiled. In *Biology of Desert Invertebrates* Dr. Crawford presents a thorough review of our knowledge of these often overlooked components of arid ecosystems. Although primarily intended as a book for researchers and students of desert biota, it is almost certain to fulfill the author's hope of appealing to serious naturalists as well.

The book is divided into five parts. The first part, Perspectives, is divided into two chapters. Chapter 1 provides an overview of the nature, origins and distribution of the world's deserts. Most Canadian readers probably need to be reminded, as I did, that virtually all of the District of Franklin and much of the Ungava Peninsula are polar deserts. These areas receive very little precipitation and are so cold throughout the year

that most moisture is in the form of ice, which is virtually useless to plants and animals. This section is followed by a too short discussion of desert climate. In Chapter 2 the emphasis shifts to a quick review of the invertebrates that live in deserts.

Parts 2 through 4 comprise the bulk of the book. Part 2, Adaptations to Xeric Environments, consists of five chapters and is a discussion of morphological, physiological, and behavioral mechanisms adopted by different species to reduce water loss, remain in a favorable microhabitat, and acquire energy while avoiding unnecessary exposure to predators. Much of the discussion concerns behavioral adaptations, but in the summary to Part 2, Dr. Crawford points out that evolutionary success depends on a complex set of factors which includes the morphological and physiological adaptations, as well as the behavioral ones.

The next four chapters comprise Part 3, Life-History Patterns. The author discusses the importance of timing of reproduction and development, and differences in patterns of resource utilization among species with various life-history strategies. The highly



Jaagumagi, R. 1984. "Goodbye Bugs: A practical guide to coping with insects in the great outdoors, by Alan West and Bev Smallman [Review]." *The Canadian field-naturalist* 98(3), 401–401. <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.355174>.

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