

BOOK REVIEW

PSYLLIDAE OF THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT
by R. N. MATHUR, Indian Council of
Agricultural Research, New Delhi.
February 1975, xii 429 pp. Rs. 38.50

Psyllids have been a much neglected group of insects in this country as evident from the absence of sufficient concentrated work for the past many years and the publication of this monographic work on the group by the eminent Forest Entomologist, certainly fulfils a long felt need.

The brief introductory section provides a history of work done on this group in India since the first discovery of *Diaphorina guttulata* from Poona in 1890. Information on the methods of collection and rearing and preparation for study is really useful. In the next section on the ecology and economic importance of psyllids, stress is made on the habits, nature of damage and economic importance, along with a detailed host-psyllid list, which in view of the high host specificity of the insects offers valuable data. Mention has also been made of the destructive psyllid species in other countries.

The section on external morphology of adults provides a sound basis for an understanding of the taxonomic treatment given in the next section. The importance of the immature stages in the classification of psyllids has been aptly discussed. A discussion is also presented relating to the relationship of Indian psyllid fauna with those of other zoogeographic areas.

The major section deals with detailed taxonomic studies relating to 101 species belonging to 27 genera and 45 species are described as new to science. Descriptions of the immature stages of 45 species are incorporated and an attempt has been made

to establish a correlation between the classification of the adults and the immature stages.

The work is well planned with numerous clear illustrations supporting the descriptions of species and with over 225 references to literature. Besides providing useful information on psyllids, this work will serve as a sound guide to future workers on the group and would undoubtedly remain a work of reference for years to come. The author has to be congratulated on this meritorious work and the Editors, for the fine production.

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MYRIAPODA: Symposia of the Zoological Society of London, No. 32 (ed. J. G. BLOWER) Academic Press, London, 1974, 712 pp. £ 14.50

This book comprises forty three papers, most of them original, presented at the Second International Congress of Myriapodology held at the University of Manchester on 5th-12th April 1972, sponsored by the Zoological Society of London and the Centre Internationale de Myriapodologie, Paris. It also includes the Presidential address and a summary of a free discussion on the origin and interrelations of the myriapod groups. At the end is a report of the activities of the International Centre for Myriapodology. The sixty five contributors from various parts of the world cover in this book a wide spectrum of research. If taxonomy comprises the largest single group of papers presented, it is apparently because this aspect has reached fairly advanced stage as far as this group is concerned. Yet the papers indicate the confusion

prevailing in this branch. Among these, one paper attempts to show how scanning electron microscope can elucidate taxonomic problems with ease. There are two excellent papers dealing with segmentation; neuro-endocrinology also finds its proper place. Other papers cover such aspects as reproduction especially ultrastructure of spermatogenesis and ovocyte membranes; development, growth and regeneration. There are papers on various aspects of behaviour such as courtship and mating, food preferences; other aspects of ultrastructure and physiology as well as biochemistry are also represented. The book also includes papers on ecology, population studies, zoogeography and economic zoology as well as toxicology. Each paper is followed by a discussion by participants. These discussions besides being highly informative also serve to throw light on the immense lacunae existing in our knowledge

about this group of animals. The various papers in this book represent recent trends in Myriapodology; the book is an index of the present status of this branch of science. Perhaps this is the only comprehensive book on myriapods available in English literature in spite of the fact that twelve papers are either in French or in German. Eventhough the symposium took place in early 1972, the book was published only in 1974; this time lag which was perhaps inevitable appears to have been made good by attempts to update the papers by including references to more recent literature. The book is an asset to Myriapodology; Zoologists in general and research workers in particular will find it extremely valuable. It is sure to stimulate among its readers a renewed interest in myriapods.

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