

Book Review

AQUATIC INSECT ECOLOGY: 1. Biology and Habitat. J. V. Ward. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. 1992. xi+438 p. \$89.00. ISBN 0-471-55007-8 (v. 1).

A comprehensive treatment of the ecology of aquatic insects in one place is needed for both students and researchers. Professor Ward is doing this in two volumes. The first volume covers the biology and habitats, as indicated in the subtitle, of the 13 insect orders that are either entirely aquatic at some stage, or those with some members aquatic at some stage. The second volume will be devoted entirely to the feeding ecology of these aquatic species.

The contents of "Aquatic Insect Ecology" include the following sections or chapters: Insects of aquatic environments; evolution and osmotic regulation; habitats and communities (including lentic and lotic freshwater and marine, brackish, and inland salt water). The final section treats environmental conditions: temperature, substrate, water level, currents, discharge, sediment, light, dissolved oxygen, and finally, "other chemical functions." The subject of pollution and its effect on aquatic insects is entirely omitted. Although we read that polluted water greatly reduces aquatic insect populations, entomologists do not provide data in support of this assertion. This is, in our opinion, a major defect of this book.

The comprehensive bibliography is astoundingly complete and up-to-date through 1991. This will enable a student to pursue in more detail any of the topics covered. References to strictly taxonomic papers intentionally have been omitted, although the basic taxonomic guides are listed. However, some of the so-called taxonomic papers left out do have ecological details which have been overlooked. For example, Henry and Froeschner (1988) "Catalog of the Heteroptera, or True Bugs, of Canada and the Continental United States" contains a wealth of ecological data, and it lists many references to the ecology of Heteroptera that are not in Ward's book.

The illustrations and printing of this book are poor. The type is dark, and the illustrations lack the details of the originals. This is not the fault of the author or publisher, but must be that of the printer.

Comments on the cost of this book are useless. We must accept this as a fact of modern economy, not as a scam of publishers bent on bankrupting students. Do not compare the cost of scientific publications with that of popular novels. Rather, compare these costs with an evening out, a good meal, and a bottle of wine. It is your choice as to which is the best value.

As a textbook, the depth of each topic shows the careful selection of material and organization of an experienced teacher. It should be available for course work as well as supplemental reading, and as a reference for taxonomy courses. We look forward to the second volume. -**Ross H. Arnett, Jr.**