

Australian Butterflies—A Review

BY E. H. BRYAN, JR.

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Dr. G. A. Waterhouse, and the publishers, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, are to be congratulated upon the production of another splendid work on Australian Natural History. This volume is a guide to the butterflies of Australia, entitled, "What butterfly is that?", 291 pp., 34 plates, 4 figures, 1932.

The data appear to be accurate and authoritative; no work on Australian butterflies by Dr. Waterhouse could be otherwise. The arrangement is concise, comprehensive and attractive. And best of all, the volume is distinctly popular, even to the price, which is 12/6. How such a book, with artistic plates showing each of the 339 species of Australian butterflies and skippers in natural colors, can be sold for such a low price is something American publishers should investigate and try to emulate. It seems to be both possible and profitable in Australia, for a companion volume, "What bird is that?", by Neville W. Cayley, which illustrates all of Australia's birds in natural colors, also sells for 12 shillings and 6 pence and is now in its third edition.

This popular work has been in the author's mind for many years. In 1914, with Geo. Lyell, he produced a monographic study, "The butterflies of Australia," also published with colored plates by Angus and Robertson. The present volume, as far as possible, avoids technical terms. It seeks to enable anyone to identify readily any butterfly likely to be seen in the settled parts of Australia. There is a comprehensive introduction, giving the position of butterflies in nature, their life histories, and such details of morphology and taxonomy as are necessary for the identification of species. The general characteristics of egg, larva, pupa, and adult are given for each of the eight groups of butterflies and the skippers. The subjects of variation and distribution are interestingly discussed. And there is a final chapter on collecting and mounting butterflies.

For each of the 339 species the following is given: the popular and scientific names, the distribution, a non-technical description, notes on life histories and habits, and colored illustrations, including one of each sex, when these are different. On these plates the upper surface of the wings are shown on the left side and the lower on the right, thus outlining the whole butterfly, so that one's sense of form is not disturbed. Plates of larvae in black and white are also shown.

Persons interested in Australia's insect life are very fortunate in having such books as this one and R. J. Tillyard's "Insects of Australia and New Zealand," published by Angus and Robertson in 1926. There is great need in Hawaii for just such books, both technical and popular, bringing our knowledge of Hawaii's interesting insect life down to date, and making it available to the student and amateur.