

MORON, M. A., AND AGUSTIN ARAGON (eds.) 1998. Avances en el estudio de la diversidad, importancia y manejo de los coleópteros edafícolas americanos. [Advances in the study of the diversity, importance, and management of American soil inhabiting beetles]. Memorias de la V Mesa Redonda sobre Insectos Plaga Edafícolas (12 al 14 de octubre de 1998). Benemerita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, Puebla de Zaragoza, Puebla, Mexico. Sociedad Mexicana de Entomología. 184 p. ISBN 968-7801-02-6. Paperback. US \$15.00. [Send order with payment to Sociedad Mexicana de Entomología, A.C. Cuenta numero 1029054-8, Bancomer, S.A., Sucursal Coatepec (313), Veracruz, MEXICO. Request a receipt (be sure your return address is correct); on receipt send a copy by FAX to: Cuauhtémoc Deloya (28) 18-78-09, Xalapa, MEXICO.

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This publication is a collection of 16 papers presented at a round table in October, 1998. It is remarkable that the finished book was printed by the end of the year. Obviously it was very well organized in order to have author's manuscripts in the hands of the printer immediately. Only 200 copies were printed. The editors were the organizers, as well as significant contributors. Only 1 paper is in English, the others in Spanish, with abstracts in Spanish and English.

The title is somewhat misleading in several ways. America here means south of the US, with which most Norteamericanos would quibble; 12 papers deal with Mexico, with 1 each for Guatemala, Costa Rica, Colombia, and Uruguay. All papers deal exclusively with scarab beetles, with the Uruguay paper treating 2 species of weevils also. The many other soil "coleópteros" are not mentioned. Neither of these discrepancies detracts from the importance of the contents, but others would hope for it to be more extensive.

One of the editors (Morón) contributed as author or co-author to 6 of the 16 papers, as well as his role in organizing the roundtable and in editing the proceedings. His interests in the Scarabaeidae have created a new era in Mexican faunal studies, along with his students and colleagues. In 1986, he published his monumental 341-page book entitled "El genero *Phyllophaga* en Mexico" and published by the Instituto de Ecología, Mexico. Since that time he has continued his studies and to describe new species. Several papers in the present volume attest to the need for descriptions, mentioning new species in numbers over 100. Many more probably await discovery.

Although I personally decry the current movement to split up the "Scarabaeidae" into various components by raising many subfamilies to family rank, it may be a long time until these efforts stabilize. In this book, Melolonthidae is considered a family, with the Dynastinae a subfamily of it. Fourteen of the 16 papers deal with Melolonthidae (actually 13 on *Phyllophaga* and 1 on *Cyclocephala*); one discusses the use of *Bacillus popilliae* for biocontrol of *Phyllophaga*.

The book is divided into 3 sections: 1) Diversidad y distribución de coleópteros edafícolas [7]; 2) Importancia de los coleópteros edafícolas [6]; 3) Control de los coleópteros edafícolas [3] [numbers in brackets indicate number of articles]. The adults of *Phyllophaga* are often called May or June beetles, and the larvae are "white grubs". In Latin America they are called "gallina ciega". Adults do cause foliar damage to a wide variety of trees, but the most damaging stage is the larva. Because of the great number of undescribed species (based on adults), it is not surprising that larval identification is nearly impossible. One paper, by C. R. Salinas & A. E. Castro Ramírez, describes larvae of 6 species, by providing illustrations (including graphics of the characters), descriptions, and keys to separate these (from the highlands of Chiapas).

Larvae are reported as pests on sesame, rice, broccoli, sugarcane, onions, asparagus, beans, corn, potatoes, sorghum, tomatoes, other vegetables, pastures, and cultivated ornamental flowers. This roundtable is an important contribution to our understanding of these soil insects. Knowing that 254 species of *Phyllophaga* are known from Mexico; 71 from Guatemala (20 new); 60 from Costa Rica (17 new); 27 from Colombia; and more than 200 species from the US, the enormity of the problem is obvious. Continued studies should be encouraged and the results published as rapidly as this volume. Congratulations to all who contributed to its production.

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