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Title: Book Review: Provisional Atlas of the Ticks (Ixodoidea) of the British Isles

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which is sufficiently flexible to meet the challenges and demands of modern natural history. This book reflects a society spending its resources in pursuit of its objectives - the publication of scientific information.

Introductory chapters include a history of recording, current situation, geology, habitats, conservation, attracting butterflies to the garden, useful addresses and a well-balanced argument on collecting.

There are, no doubt, one or two hair-splitting criticisms that connoisseurs of London's butterflies may find, but most of the errors I spotted have already been sorted out by an erratum slip.

The odd page size (220mm x 180mm) results from printing the maps equal in size to earlier works on London's fauna and flora so as to allow for the eventual production of compatible overlays.

The apparent high price reflects modern production costs; however, the book sells at only a few pence above cost price, and is really a bargain! I recommend this book to everyone interested in butterflies, and it should be essential reading for all London and Home Counties naturalists. Even though I live 150 miles away I still find myself dipping into this book from time to time.

Derek Whiteley

**PROVISIONAL ATLAS OF THE CLICK BEETLES
(COLEOPTERA : ELATEROIDEA) OF THE
BRITISH ISLES**
by Howard Mendel

Published by the Institute of Terrestrial Ecology, 1988. Price £5.50
ISBN 1-870393-11-2

This atlas summarises records gleaned by the national click beetle recording scheme, which is organised by Howard Mendel with the aid of the Biological Records Centre at Monks Wood. Of the 76 species of click beetles currently on the British list as many as 19 are listed in the Red Data Book of British Insects. Many of these are relict species associated with ancient woodland habitats and so an atlas summarising their British status and distribution provides invaluable sustenance to the current debate on insect indicator species of ancient woodland.

To each species the atlas devotes a page consisting of a 10km dot map and a numerical table showing vice county distribution. A map and key to vice

counties is provided at the beginning in order to interpret these tables. Symbols representing three data classes are used in the dot maps in a way which is informative, but not confusing, although of course it must be kept in the mind that the modern increase in recording obscures the visual portrayal in the maps of the real decline of many of the species. Two date classes are used in the vice county tables. Three extremely rare species and several extinct species are given separate treatment in an introduction which describes their recorded history in the British Isles.

It is heartening to see a number of museums mentioned in the acknowledgements. Surely this type of project must be a major justification for providing the resources which our insect collections require for their upkeep. It is to be hoped that the publication of this provisional atlas will stimulate museums and individuals to contribute further records to the recording scheme for eventual publication in the final atlas.

Derek Lott

**PROVISIONAL ATLAS OF THE TICKS
(IXODOIDEA) OF THE BRITISH ISLES**
by K P Martyn

Published by the Institute of Terrestrial Ecology, 1988. Price £4.00
ISBN 1-870393-09-0

This atlas deals with the 23 British species of ticks, which are a group of ectoparasitic mites familiar to many people who take their dogs for walks in the country or even those who wander bare legged through sheep pasture with tall grass.

A brief introduction summarises information on taxonomy, ecology and the medical importance of these animals in a concise, but informative way. A checklist of species is included in order to update the superceded nomenclature in the standard identification work. A map showing the spread of records used in the atlas reveals a surprisingly comprehensive if thinly scattered geographical coverage. The London area shows a relatively dense concentration of records. Sources of the records included in the atlas are listed and there seems to be ample scope for improving on the density of records over much of the country by reference to provincial museum collections.

Each species within the atlas is allocated a double page spread comprising a 10km square dot map and some text. Unfortunately no information on dates of records is

given with the maps, which makes appraisal of distribution difficult in a country with such a rapidly changing environment as ours. However this is more than compensated for by the text, which gives details of biology and ecology for each species. Information on medical importance and morphological characteristics are included where appropriate. Comprehensive lists of recorded hosts are appended for all species.

To a non specialist such as myself the variations shown by different species in their ecologies are surprising and the whole book makes interesting and informative reading. Ticks are animals which have their niche in the public consciousness and yet they are little known amongst general biologists. This publication, apart from being a distribution atlas, is a hand reference guide to this fascinating group.

Derek Lott

COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT FOR MUSEUMS

by D Andrew Roberts (Editor)

Published by Museums Documentation Association, 1988, pp 237. Price £30. ISBN 0-905963-61-X

For those who were unable to attend the INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT FOR MUSEUMS (the title given to the first Annual Conference of the Museums Documentation Association) held in Cambridge from 26-29 September 1987, this compilation of papers, expertly compiled and edited by Andrew Roberts, has to be the next best thing. A well finished, hardback volume, it is divided into sections devoted to Surveys of Collection Management Systems and Practice, System Design, Role of Professional Groups, Procedural and Policy Developments in Individual Museums, Training and Advisory Developments, Consultancy Support for Museums and Collections Management Systems. The thirty-six papers have an inevitable bias towards the experience of staff in museums and related institutions in Britain and North America, but it is pleasing to read contributions from colleagues in Australia, Denmark and the Netherlands.

To review each and every contribution is impossible here, but the highlights for me included Jane Sledge's SURVEY OF NORTH AMERICAN COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS AND PRACTICE, (Chapter 3) written with humour and obvious understanding of the museum condition. Her paper ('about the search for the Holy Grail of collections management, the ensuing misconceptions and expectations ...') is thought-

provoking and yet somehow reassuring in reminding us that even in North America the need for standards and compatibility has yet to be realised ('If you believe this, there is a very interesting bridge in Brooklyn that's for sale').

The antipodean papers were also refreshing, and I especially enjoyed John Hodge's COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT IN RELATION TO MUSEUM STUDIES TRAINING IN AUSTRALIA (Chapter 29) which highlighted the separateness of institutions and the dichotomy of Art Galleries and Museums in that country as factors posing particular problems for training in collections management. Training for collections management is perceived as an important need - it crops up throughout the volume and not just in the Training and Advisory Developments section. Joanne Neri's personal experience of training at the Center for Museum Studies of John F Kennedy University (Chapter 30) helps to put many student needs in focus. In her words 'Efforts to open channels of communication between students and professionals of museology have ... never been more dynamic, however, (they) have also never been more urgent'.

Reading about museum documentation is, understandably, not always entertaining. However, this volume always makes interesting reading, and provides a valuable 'state of the art' reference work, as well as a record of what must have been an excellent conference. I must try not to miss the next one.

Peter Davis

THE INSECT AND SPIDER COLLECTIONS OF THE WORLD

by R H Arnett and G A Samuelson

Published by E J Brill (Leiden) and Flora and Fauna Publications (Florida) 1986; pp220, spiral bound, thin card covers. Price Gld 41 (£14 approx). ISBN 90-04-08192-5

The bulk of this directory consists of two lists of public and private insect and spider collections arranged alphabetically by country and owner respectively. The first list is interesting because it lists all the countries of the world whether or not they have collections (even Antarctica which is not a country in this sense) and therefore includes useful negative information. In this respect it also lists those known collections but from which no return was received to the questionnaire. Obviously North