

Book Review

Alonso-Zarazaga, M. A. and C. H. C. Lyal 1999. *A World Catalogue of Families and Genera of Curculionoidea (Insecta: Coleoptera) (Excepting Scolytidae and Platypodidae)* 316 pp., Publ. Date 27 Dec. 1999. ISBN: 84-605-99994-9, from ENTOMOPRAXIS S.C., Apartado 36164, 08080 Barcelona (Spain), Tel. & Fax: 34 - 933 230 877, e-mail: entomopraxis@entomopraxis.com, <http://www.entomopraxis.com/news.htm>. Cost: 78 Euros + 4% VAT + postage.

The authors of this superb catalogue deserve accolades for the splendid job they have performed in recording this list of all genus and family group names of all weevils, excluding only Scolytidae and Platypodidae, treated recently by others. Included are 5444 valid genera and 641 valid subgenera, with all of their synonyms. The fact that this work covers the World is unique in itself and the accuracy of the spelling and citations make it a pleasure to use. The bibliography includes more than three thousand citations. Type species are cited for all genera, and both type species and genera are indexed separately making it easy to find them quickly. The type genus for each family-group name is included; and names are provided for all homonyms and unavailable names currently in use. The general distribution of species by countries and/or regions is listed for all genera.

Unfortunately the number of species in each genus is neither listed nor estimated. While this would have been difficult to do accurately in many genera, especially the larger ones, it would have been very helpful to know which genera are monobasic, few in number of species, or very large. Even an estimate would have been useful. However, I hesitate to criticize anything about this work, since it is such a monumental task and done so well.

The number of supplementary lists included are extensive, e.g., a list of 30 submissions to the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature; and nomenclatural changes proposed in the catalogue, of new taxa, new replacement names, new synonymies, resurrected names, changes of status, transfers, and several others.

The authors have stated that theirs is an eclectic classification, mainly following the work of Thompson, 1991 (to whom the catalogue is dedicated, in part); Kuschel, 1995; and Zimmerman, 1993 and 1994 a & b). They recognize the chaotic state of higher classification of the weevils currently being studied by many individuals and teams of specialists and hope that these workers will use this catalogue to assist in making corrections of

taxa that are misplaced. Having personally produced two significant catalogues of New World weevils, I am aware that many readers believe that production of a catalog is a simple task, easily accomplished by any competent entomologist. This is far from the truth, due to the large number of errors perpetuated in earlier works and the difficulties of locating all of the many nomenclatural changes that have occurred, and interpreting these correctly. These authors are to be thanked for carrying out such a difficult task in such a complete and accurate way. A question that I have been asked frequently since the publication of this catalogue is "Should we follow this classification in our research papers and organizing our collections?" My answer must be a qualified yes. The qualifications refer mainly to the recognition of a number of small (even monobasic) families and subfamilies more commonly treated in other ways (e.g., Eurhynchidae, Eriirhinidae, Raymondionymidae and Cryptolaryngidae, and movement of many tribes and genera to different subfamilies). Each taxonomist and curator must use judgment when considering what part of this classification to follow, especially since the data to support these changes is not present here, nor even in the papers cited. However, until such data are presented to indicate need for changing this classification, it remains the best and most complete available. I recommend its adoption in general, until a more advanced classification including a modern cladistic analysis with complete data is published.

The few less than positive attributes of this catalogue are far outweighed by the overwhelmingly excellent work. This outstanding reference work will be invaluable to any taxonomist interested in weevils and to any collection manager who includes Curculionoidea in his/her responsibilities. In my opinion, it is very much worth the cost of purchase, which is quite modest, considering the huge volume of data included. — Charles W. O'Brien, Center for Biological Control, Florida A & M University, Tallahassee, FL 32307-4100