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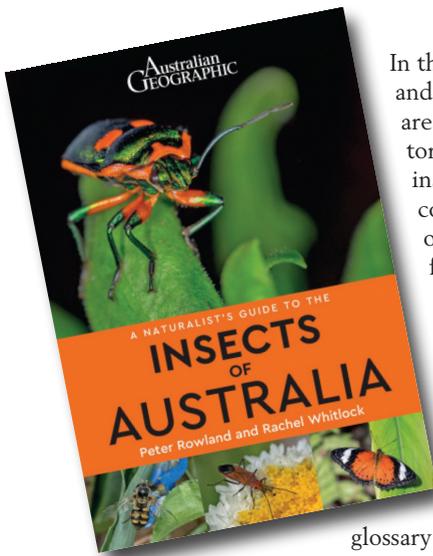
A Naturalist's Guide to the Insects of Australia

Peter Rowland & Rachel Whitlock

John Beauty Publishing

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In their introduction, the authors clearly state that this book sets out to cover a range of genera and representative species that are commonly encountered or broadly distributed in the eastern area of Australia that runs from Darwin to Adelaide. It is a book that will appeal to natural historians of all ages who want an easy-to-transport guide that will offer basic information on the insects they might encounter while traveling around eastern Australia. The book is small, colourful and attractive so it will have instant appeal to travellers and tourists. It covers 28 orders of insect, with a brief overview of each in the introduction. The common or distinctive families in each order are then illustrated with photographs of representative genera and species. Each of these is accompanied by a description of the species plus notes on its distribution, habitat and biology.

While this guide only sets out to offer the briefest of overviews of insect diversity in eastern Australia, it sets this in the wider context of the incredible diversity that this fauna offers. At the rear of the book is a table that lists all of the insect orders and the families that they comprise, listing for each family the numbers of genera, species and subspecies that they contain. This very neatly gives the reader an appreciation of the vast number of insect species found in the region. There is also a brief account of insect lifecycles, a glossary and an index, plus a list of useful websites and references for further reading.

For anyone unfamiliar with the insects of this region, this book is excellent value for money. It is a small gateway to a vast subject and will, I hope, stimulate many of its readers to go on to acquire a greater interest and appreciation of Australian insects.

Peter Smithers