

## BOOK REVIEW

### Identification Guide to Bees in Sub-Saharan Africa

*The Bee Genera and Subgenera of Sub-Saharan Africa*. Eardley, C., Kuhlmann, M., and Pauly, A.; *Abc Taxa*, Belgium; 2010. vol. 7, vi + 138 pp.; 17.26 EUR [~\$24.36 USD].

This book is intended primarily for the identification, to the genus and subgenus level, of bees of Sub-Saharan Africa. It is published as part of the Belgian Global Taxonomy Initiative and is intended for beginners as well as for ecologists and others making studies of pollination and associated matters in which bees are involved. Sections are included on conservation of bees and on capture (with a net as well as using various kinds of traps), preparation, and curation of bees for a collection. Labeled diagrams and brief definitions explain the terminology used in the keys.

Most of the book is devoted to the systematic account in which keys are provided to all taxa, down to the genus and subgenus levels. The keys are simplified and brief. Of course these are desirable features but are sometimes carried too far for a person not experienced with bee systematics. For example in the key to families, the only character to distinguish the Andrenidae from other families is “Two subantennal sutures.” The unexperienced user might need some explanation of how hard these sutures may be to see in black, strongly punctuate specimens.

Each taxon (family, subfamily, tribe, genus, subgenus) is provided with a brief account, usually giving its distribution, nesting sites if known, and sometimes additional characters. Photographs, reproduced in color, are provided for most taxa and will be useful in checking tentative identifications made with the keys. For some groups one could wish that the photographs were reproduced at larger size to show certain characters more clearly, but they are a valuable contribution nonetheless.

A particularly valuable section is Appendix 1, which lists all taxa, and for each gives the number of described species from Sub-Saharan Africa and references to revisional or other papers with which one can identify species. Thus, although this book will only help the user determine the genus or subgenus of a bee, it includes a guide to the literature needed for also identifying species.

—Charles D. Michener  
*Entomology Division*  
*Natural History Museum*  
*University of Kansas*  
*Lawrence, Kansas 66045, USA*