

Synopsis

Smithsonian Handbooks are the most visually appealing guides on the natural world in the book marketplace. Featuring more than 500 full-color illustrations and photographs, along with detailed annotations, Smithsonian Handbooks make identification easy and accurate.

Book Information

Series: Smithsonian Handbooks

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Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (39 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #80,495 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #13 in [Books > Science & Math > Biological Sciences > Animals > Butterflies](#) #417 in [Books > Science & Math > Nature & Ecology > Fauna](#) #2547 in [Books > Sports & Outdoors](#)

Customer Reviews

I wanted a book that had butterflies and moths from around the world so I could get some paint schemes, and this one is what I was hoping for! I don't know that it would be very useful for identifying either (maybe if it had appendices for color or something for referencing), but it's great for my purposes. It includes basic butterfly/moth info, habitats, haunts, and what I was really looking for: Pictures. If there would be one thing that I would have liked even more, it would be even bigger pictures, but I'm being picky. I don't need to buy another book.

The jacket blurb says this series comprises the most "accessible recognition guides." I'm not sure what that means, nor am I sure who this book is intended for but it wasn't me, nor, I suspect, any average backyard nature observer. The illustrations are beautiful but as an identification guide it is totally useless. First, it is too inclusive. Butterflies and moths from the entire world are included, making its applicability limited. Worse, the insects are arranged not by color, size, habitat, or similar factor, but by their zoological family! If I were knowledgeable enough to have this information at my disposal, I probably wouldn't need a guide book. Finally, very few of the insects have an illustration

of the caterpillar stage included. My recommendation: if you want to identify moths or butterflies, look for another guide.

Excellent basic field guide. I've been using it to learn more about different species, as well as to identify the butterflies and moths in my collection. Obviously, no single book could ever feasibly be comprehensive enough to include all butterflies (20,000+ species) and moths (150,000+) that exist in the world, and unsurprisingly not every specimen in my collection was in this book, but it's a great starting point. The drawings are terrific, and it's great to see representative and highlighted species from every family, as well as descriptions of their range, habitat, etc. I really like it.

Lovely illustrated guide to butterflies and moths with large pictures and clear descriptions. I am new to Lepidoptera identification and still finding my way. The book is broken up by butterfly and moth families, the trick is trying to find out what family your sighting is in. In time I am sure it will become easier, but at the moment it is a tad confusing.

I have to admit I bought this book to pick out the next butterfly tattoo I'm getting. So that being said, color and photo definition was important. Unfortunately, the printing on this book was poorly done. The colors are all a little washed out and not very sharp. Otherwise this was a great book. It gave me more information about butterflies and moths than I ever wanted to know. So if your purpose is just to learn about them this is a great item. If you need the photos for some reason, be prepared to double check the color accuracy some other way.

"Butterflies and Moths" by David Carter, DK Smithsonian Handbooks (DK), New York, 2002 (1st American Ed. 1992). ISBN - 978-0-7894-8983-8. SC 304 pages. 8.5" x 5 1/2" x 1 1/4". Author David Carter, entomologist at Natural History Museum, London, has 40 years experience as Lepidoptera specialist and has also written several books & scientific papers on insects. The 600 plus photographs in this handbook are by Frank Greenway and shows 500 different species in full color, completely indexed. Introductory commentary discusses the origin of Lepidoptera, differences between butterflies and moths, depicts their life cycles of egg, larvae, caterpillar and pupae (chrysalis of butterfly & cocoons of moths), and as adults - and describes their special features of mimicry, warning colors & mimicry associations, camouflage, & poisonous features, etc. Conveniently, the author separates the butterflies and moths into their scientific "families" - giving numerous examples (species) of each of the 5 known butterfly families and also many

examples of species within the 22 families of moths, - noting that some moth family members and many species of Lepidoptera are unknown, under reported or poorly documented, indicating an area for further study. By convention, using Carl Linnaeus nomenclature, orders of insects as Lepidoptera ("scaly wings") have names ending in "idae": thusly, the 5 orders of Butterflies are Hesperii-, Papilion-, Pier-, Lycaen-, and Nymphal-. Example: the well-known Genus species *Papilio glaucis*, common name "Tiger Swallowtail", is in the Papilionidae family. This handbook has additional information that tells us its geographic location, description of special markings and full-color picture of the caterpillar & adult, and the wingspan range of 3 1/2" to 6 1/2". Also featured is the Saturniidae "Atlas Moth", (*Attacus atlas*) with wingspan range from 5 1/2" - 12". And so it goes, for 500 different species of butterflies & moths. All total there are 170,000 known species of Lepidoptera of which circa 1/10th or 17,000 are butterflies, insects evolving after the moths and both after advent and emergence of flowering flora. The book's size and flexible cover permits its use as a field manual - a scientific guide scrutinized for accuracy by the Smithsonian Institute's scientific staff. This handbook will never be outdated, only updated as new species are found and verified with DNA as needed. Finis

This child called me butterfly Grandma when he was very little. I had a very good butterfly book which helped him understand how beautiful they were. As he grew older He began to learn more about common and latin names, color, size, and habitat of verious butterflies. I promised him a book like this when he was old enough. He was so excited that this one not only told him about the butterflies we studied together but also avout Moths.

I have other books of this type, which I was very happy to have. But this one blows my other books away. Just the intro(very informative)is almost 30 pages long. So far this definitely the best I've seen. Grab it!

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