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**THE COMMON INSECTS OF
NORTH AMERICA**

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This is a very courageous undertaking, and on the whole a successful one. The purpose is nothing less than to provide "an easy way to identify the more common insects of North America north of Mexico". It is the next logical step beyond Essig's *Insects of Western North America*, and is perhaps more usable by laymen. The concept is that of a simple, swift introduction to insects as animals, their characteristics, biology and value; a short pictured key to Orders; then the descriptions of Ametabola (6 spp.), Paurometabola (169 spp.), and Holometabola (996 spp.); a list of families represented; a 14-page glossary; a general bibliography, up-to-date and well chosen; and a technical taxonomic bibliography, by and for specialists. Canadians and C.D.A. workers are very well represented, especially in the latter. There are two indexes: subjects and common names (14 pp.); and scientific names (24 pp.).

The line drawings are always across the top of the page, a useful idea for quick reference. An adult of every one of the 1171 spp. is illustrated. Often there is more than one drawing per species, showing an egg, a larva or a pupa, venation, habitus, etc. On average each insect is shown from one to two inches long, with a size scale given, unfortunately, I think, in inches taken to two places of decimals for minute forms. Few available rulers show inches in tenths, much less in hundredths. Surely millimeters would have been a more useful scale, and certainly one with a better future? However, it should not be a great task to convert the figures for some future edition. The description is generally opposite or below the drawing on the same page. Ranges are given with utmost economy in the text.

A bonus is a centre section of 8 pages in color, showing such lepidopterous goodies as swallowtails, a cecropia, a monarch and a viceroy, admirals, fritillaries, polyphemus, imperial and cynthia moths, and a small, colorful selection of bees, wasps, beetles and three flies.

The authors are Californians, and the foreword is by Dr. Evert I. Schlinger, of the University of California at Berkeley.

H. R. MacCarthy