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THE LIFE HISTORIES OF THE TAIWANESE THECLINI

by H. Uchida

1999. Numazu, Japan. 208pp (80 color pl.) (20 x 30cm). ¥19,000 (ca. \$190) cloth (boxed). No ISBN (private printing).

This large-format book treats in detail the life histories of 25 of the 66 thecline Lycaenidae known for Taiwan. The book begins with 80 exceptional sharp and clear color pages showing the transformation and habitats of each of the species treated, along with figures of museum specimens of both sexes. Mixed in with the life history and habitat photos are occasional tourist photographs of scenery in Taiwan.

The text is entirely in Japanese; in fact, there is not a word of English in the entire book or cover, except for the title in micro-print English along with the publication credits on the last page of the book. Latin names of the butterflies are given at each species heading. In addition to the color plates, there is text for each species from pages 90 to 141. Again, mixed in with the text are black and white photos of various scenic or tourist views of Taiwan. Each species treatment includes a Taiwan distribution map. The book is rather costly (ca. \$190) but is cloth bound and in a sturdy slipcase.

The last third of the book is nothing more than a long travelog of the author's many years of travel in Taiwan, illustrated with numerous black and white photographs, showing tourist and natural sights and various scenes of life in Taiwan, and also showing photographs of the author and friends in various places in Taiwan. The author appears to have visited virtually every corner of Taiwan: it is unfortunate that this reviewer could not read the no-doubt interesting text that accompanies this section of the book. This is definitely a book on collecting butterflies in Taiwan and not something many butterfly observers are likely to find appealing, yet is in the amateur tradition of recreational collectors, whereby Uchida in particular has greatly contributed to our knowledge of the biologies and behavior of these butterflies through his many observations and photographs.

For all its eccentricities, the book is a remarkable and profusely illustrated summary of the thecline life histories the author has been able to photograph in Taiwan. Undoubtedly, the travelog portion of the book is also most entertaining, but reserved for those who are fluent in Japanese. The author has written a previous book on various Taiwan butterflies and their biologies; this sequel certainly is as interesting as his previous 2-volume opus (Uchida, 1987-91). Hopefully, we will witness further books illustrated with the author's exceptional photography and life history studies.

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