Book Reviews

Book Review Editor's Note: We are continuing to use the current currency codes. Thus Canadian dollars are CAD, U.S. dollars are USD, Euros are EUR, China Yuan Remimbi are CNY, Australian dollars are AUD and so on.

ZOOLOGY

The R.O.M. Field Guide to Butterflies of Ontario

By Peter W. Hall, Colin Jones, Antonia Guidotti, and Brad Hubley. 2014. Royal Ontario Museum, 100 Queen's Park, Toronto, ON, Canada, M5S 2C6. 488 pages, 29.99 CAD, Paper.

When visiting the City of Toronto, one of the top tourist attractions is the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM). Not only is this a place full of history, it is also the home to its own publishing company. ROM books vary in topics ranging from history of cultures and Canadian heritage, to natural history, including field guides. The ROM Field Guide to Butterflies of Ontario is the first butterfly guide that has been published by the ROM. This book was written by a group of highly skilled insect experts with careers including the Senior Advisor of Biodiversity to the Canadian Collection of Insects, Arachnids, and Nematodes, the ROM entomology collections manager, the ROM entomology technician, and a zoologist at Ontario's Natural Heritage Information Centre focussing on insects.

I have always been a fan of butterflies and have recently become more active in attempting butterfly identification while in the field. I have been searching for a good field guide for a number of years now, although I could never seem to find one that really met all of my needs. Many field guides for butterflies that I have come across have either been for all of North America or Eastern North America. Although they were all good guides by well-known publishers, I have been searching for something less general and solely based on Ontario butterflies. I have come across some locally produced butterfly guides/checklists, such as the "Butterflies of Toronto" field guide. However, this was a much too localized list. After receiving this field guide to review, I felt as if all my needs in a field guide were met.

I have never been one to read the preface of a field guide, except perhaps if I needed help using it. However, this guide had an interesting preface beyond explaining how to use different aspects of the book. Within the introduction there is a brief history on butterfly research in Ontario, butterfly life history and morphology, factors influencing butterfly distribution in Ontario, butterfly conservation and protection in Ontario, and a list of 14 sites throughout Ontario to observe butterflies. These sites were chosen based on the authors' favourites, incorporating diversity in vegetation and likelihood of high butterfly diversity. Reading this information was not only interesting but also made me very excited to learn more and see more butterflies.

This ROM field guide includes all species that have been recorded in Ontario, documented in more than 800 photographs. Butterflies are categorized based on taxonomic family; each family then has a short introduction including descriptions and photos of eggs, caterpillars, and chrysalides.

Each individual species account includes photos showing the butterflies from above and below the wings, with white arrows to point out identifying features, as well a photo of their corresponding caterpillar. Figures include a distribution map of both historical and present occurrences, as well as a phenogram (spanning from March to November) depicting the flight period within Ontario's major forest regions: the Carolinian zone, mixed forest and boreal/tundra. The profile text explains observable traits of the adult butterfly and caterpillar, similar species, behaviour, overwintering stage, habitat, distribution and abundance.

When trying to identify a wide variety of flora or fauna, one of the most useful features is a distribution map to ensure that it "should" be located in the area that I am observing it in. Thus, the addition of these maps and flight season timelines is extremely helpful. Photos for all butterflies and caterpillars were of good quality and arrows pointing to main identifying features are handy for those who may not be familiar with butterfly anatomical terms.

The guide concludes with two more informative sections. First, a small compilation of other butterflies that could occur in Ontario but have yet to be officially recorded; this is complete with a photo and brief description. Second, a partial list of plants that are beneficial to plant in butterfly gardens is included. This latter section includes six pages of information about plant species and the life stage of the butterfly that uses the plant.

Overall, I would recommend the ROM's *Field Guide to Butterflies of Ontario* to anyone who is looking for a detailed and easy-to-use butterfly field guide. The introduction and final section of this guide were wonderful additions as learning tools for butterfly natural history and conservation. The conservation segment of

this book also suggested that users sign up to e-butterfly (http://www.e-butterfly.org/) and assist with the sightings and tracking of butterflies, a website with a very similar appeal to e-bird (http://ebird.org/content/ebird/). The detailed butterfly profiles make identification easier through the use of photos, key features, and distribution maps. Finally, I really enjoyed reading the list of plants for use in butterfly gardens, as this list was so diverse that it made creating a butterfly friendly garden seem easily attainable. This guide has many diverse features and I feel it not only serves as a great addition to one's field guide collection, but also has use beyond that, reaching out to both the butterfly enthusiast and gardener.

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