
BOOK REVIEW: BUTTERFLIES OF BOTSWANA

Title	Torben Larsen's Butterflies of Botswana and their Natural History
Citation	Collins, S.C., Dobson, J.C.H. & Williams M.C. 2021. <i>Torben Larsen's Butterflies of Botswana and their Natural History</i> . 200 pp. (ISBN 978-0-620-95246-0)
Authors	Stephen Collins, Jeremy Dobson & Mark Williams
Publisher	JCD Publishers, South Africa.
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Review This excellent book was produced from the unpublished manuscript of the late Torben Larsen, that he wrote approximately 30 years ago. At that time, it was thought there wasn't a large enough market for the book to be formally published, and as such the document was not widely available. The only other publications specific to the butterflies of Botswana until now, were three out-of-date obscure checklists compiled by Eliot Pinhey back in the 1970s. These checklists are not widely available to the general public.

Torben was a well-known expert on African and Middle Eastern butterflies. He published over 400 papers, popular articles and books on butterflies, with most of those focussing on the Afrotropical fauna.

The natural history of the 289 or so Botswanan butterfly species covered in this book is described in detail. The species dealt with included those have been confirmed as occurring in Botswana, as well as those that could possibly be found in the country. Also, an undescribed species of *Lepidopchrysops* is incorporated.

Starting with the Introduction, the history of the book's development, as well as a brief biography of Torben Larsen and his works, are outlined. This is followed by the species account section, which makes up the bulk of the books contents. For each species the following information is provided: Species name with author, latest common English name, wingspan, identification characteristics, habits, early stages and distribution. Furthermore, most species are well illustrated with photographs of both dorsal and ventral surfaces, making species identification a simple process. Following the species accounts, a gazetteer of all places referred to in the book are listed, along with a summary of the butterflies found at each locality. This is an extremely nice addition to the book, and as far as I am aware no other book on the African butterflies provides such a detailed and comprehensive gazetteer. A comprehensive and updated Bibliography follows the gazetteer. Finally, the book is completed with a detailed Index.

All three authors are well-known African butterfly specialists, who have published widely on the African fauna. They have updated Torben's unpublished manuscript to reflect the latest information and taxonomies. The book is beautifully produced and has been printed on high quality A4 size paper. It is available in both hard and softcover. The book is available through the website of the Lepidopterists' Society of Africa (www.lepsoc.org).

Finally, the book is written in Torben's characteristic first-hand experience style, and makes for easy and informative reading. The authors must be commended for producing this wonderful volume, and as such it is a must have for anyone interested in African butterflies. No doubt, it will stimulate further research on the these fascinating Botswanan insects.

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