

BOOK REVIEW

KOMÁREK S.: MIMICRY, APOSEMATISM AND RELATED PHENOMENA IN ANIMALS AND PLANTS. BIBLIOGRAPHY 1800–1900. Vesmír, Prague, 1998, 269 pp. ISBN 80-85977-15-X. Price DEM 36.00. Distributed by Kabourek, Zlín.

Although the phenomenon of mimicry or aposematism has been known to naturalists for centuries, its proper study began in the second half of the 19th century, shortly after the publication of Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*. The founding fathers of specialized studies were two great travelling naturalists, Henry Walter Bates (1862) and Fritz Müller (1879). Since then, the scientific research into and the debate about mimicry has played and still plays an important role in the studies of genetics and evolution. It was especially the English geneticist R.A. Fischer who emphasised that mimicry represents an important facet of the Darwinian theory of evolution, and one of the most convincing proofs of the operation of natural selection. This and other aspects of mimicry are dealt with in numerous papers scat-

tered all over world literature, many of them little known or unknown even to specialists. Therefore, compiling a complete bibliography of world literature concerning this topic was a highly deserving task. But this book is far from being merely a list of citations. The author also provided systematic index of animal and plant taxa involved in mimicry. These taxa are marked with specified abbreviations indicating the type of mimetic phenomenon and its regional (distributional) pattern. This enables the reader to obtain at least a general information on the content of each paper listed. The book lists an incredible number of citations of papers devoted to animal (mainly insect) mimicry (4,767 citations) and 471 literary sources concerning plants involved in this phenomenon. Beyond doubt, this book represents an admirable undertaking and will be of invaluable help not only to specialists but to all who are interested in the phenomenon of mimicry.

D. Povolný