


Anyone interested in the study of United States beetles will find this book to be “the one indispensable reference”. Certainly it will assume a most prominent position on the library shelves of every professional coleopterist, along with other classical treatises. We anxiously await the parts to be published since several of the larger families have not yet been treated. No publication during the past 30 years will have such a profound desirable effect on the study of beetles in the United States!

The author states in the introduction that this is an up-to-date version of Bridley’s A Manual of the Genera of Beetles of America, North of Mexico, with a completely revised form. He is conservative in his appraisal of his own work because this book certainly surpasses any similar works on U.S. beetles. Since our latest catalogue of beetles has had five supplements, the last of which was issued 14 years ago, there is no current comprehensive reference on the U.S. beetle fauna. With this treatise, including its extremely useful references, we can once again feel nearly “up-to-date” at the generic level.

In contrast to the Dillon book reviewed later, this book treats the genera of the U.S. (occasionally keys to species are also given for some of the smaller families). The latest keys to species are cited after each genus thus eliminating an extensive search of the literature. From the professional standpoint, this one advantage is well worth the price of the book.

It is printed on good quality 6x9 looseleaf paper to fit an optional three-post binder. Although the paper quality is good, it is very thin, which causes pages to tear out of the binder easily and makes turning of individual pages clumsy. The format of the book is an innovation which should be more widely used. Each family is treated as a separate fascicle with individual as well as continuous pagination. Each fascicle has its own index and bibliography, all of which contributes to the flexibility of this

(Continued on Page 95)
system. The book can be arranged with families (or fascicles) arranged alphabetically, phylogenetically, or by pages as issued. Revisions of separate fascicles are possible with this arrangement and they can be added with other notes to the loose leaf scheme. Each fascicle is arranged according to the following pattern: 1) family name, describer, date, and common name, 2) family synonymy, 3) general features of family, 4) description (morphological), 5) ecology, 6) status of classification, 7) general distribution and number of species, 8) key to genera in U. S., 9) classification of U. S. genera, and 10) references. Few typographic errors were noted in the two parts, and those in Part I were corrected on the first page of Part II. The author has done a fine job in organization which greatly enhances the usefulness of the complicated subject matter.

The author has spared no effort in trying to make this reference as complete and accurate as possible, consulting 45 outstanding American and European coleopterists on their respective specialties. However, the author is responsible for the organization and final form. The one exception to this is the fascicle treating the Carabidae which is entirely the work of G. E. Ball. This is an excellent effort on the part of Dr. Ball to bring our classification up to date on this large and difficult group. It is especially helpful with its keys and indications, by the author, that certain genera are in need of revision. Dr. Ball is to be congratulated on the fine part he played in adding to this book.

The introduction is devoted to external beetle anatomy, a key to the families of beetles of the world, a listing of families and higher categories and a bibliography of general works. The entire work is considerably enhanced by the general habitus drawings of Miss Eileen R. Van Tassell.

The Catholic University is to be congratulated on its foresight and interest in Dr. Arnett's work and for making such a valuable reference available to our scientific society.—Robert E. Woodruff.