

BOOK REVIEW: BUTTERFLIES OF THE AFROTROPICAL INDIAN OCEAN ISLANDS

Citation Lawrence, J.M. & Williams M.C. 2021. *An Illustrated History of Butterflies of the Afrotropical Indian Ocean Islands*. 248 pp. Siri Scientific Press, Manchester, U.K.

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Review I remember paging through Bernard d'Abrera's *Butterflies of the Afrotropical Region* for the first time: my eye would frequently be drawn to some image of an extraordinary butterfly or a species unknown to me. More often than not, when referring to the text, these butterflies were found to be from Madagascar or some other Indian Ocean Island. Wouldn't it be great to have a book dedicated to the butterflies of this region? Well now of course, there is one!

An Illustrated History of Butterflies of the Afrotropical Indian Ocean Islands is the work of James Lawrence and Mark Williams and while it is a relatively small book, it is absolutely packed with wonderful illustrations and interesting information.

The book covers the butterflies of Madagascar, Comoros, Seychelles, Réunion, Mauritius, Rodrigues and Socotra. A total of 391 butterfly species have been recorded from these islands, many of which are endemic. While not all currently described species are covered in detail, most are at least referred to in the text. A unique and compelling feature of the book is the use of hand-painted illustrations, often taken from rare or little-known books. These include several iconotypes, sometimes hundreds of years old.

This book is much more than a field guide – it contains snippets of geological and historical interest, a review of related literature, and numerous illustrations that very few people will have seen before: an absolute must for anyone interested in African butterflies.

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