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REVIEW

'DARWIN'S INSECTS. CHARLES DARWIN'S ENTOMOLOGICAL NOTES WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND COMMENTS' By KENNETH G.V. SMITH (*Bull. Br. Mus. nat. Hist.* (Hist. Ser.)) Vol. **14**, No. 1 143 pp., 19 figs. 25.5 x 18.5 cm, wrappers. British Museum (Nat. Hist.), London. 1987. Price £25.

To many of us, Darwin's interest in entomology might be equated with beetle collecting. In the present work Kenneth Smith clearly shows that while beetles were important, they were only a portion of the insects Darwin collected. This work is primarily a compendium of Darwin's insects collected during the *Beagle* voyage and in England which the author was able to track down in the British Museum (Natural History), the University Museums of Oxford and Cambridge, the National Museum of Ireland (Dublin), Down House, and in other institutions. Darwin's hitherto unpublished *Insect notes* (in BMNH, London) and *Insects in Spirits of Wine* (Cambridge) provide the framework for records of Insects taken during the voyage. Given the patience needed for such a task (not to mention the subject matter), this carefully researched work could only have been done by a taxonomist.

I was pleased that the author provided relevant notes about the particular insects mentioned by Darwin. Thus, a person not completely familiar with the nomenclature could still benefit from reading this work. Toward the end of the monograph Smith provides a comprehensive list of all generic and specific names of insects derived from Darwin's name (close to 150), with appropriate comments.

From the historian's standpoint, the notebook entries might be the most interesting aspect of this work. By examining these entries, Darwin's inquisitive observational skills are evident. Here, Darwin is not churning ideas over and over in his head. He is asking relevant questions about the behaviour and form of actual organisms. This work should be interesting, not only to entomologists, but to anyone interested in Darwin's biological research. — MARY M. BARTLEY