

SWISS MILLIPEDES:

FAUNISTIQUE DES MILLE-PATTES DE SUISSE (DIPLOPODA : FAUNISTIK DER TAUSENDFUSSLER DER SCHWEIZ (DIPLOPODA)).

Ariane Pedroli-Christen

Documenta Faunistica Helvetica 14, Centre Suisse de cartographie de la faune, Terreaux 14, CH-2000 Neuchatel, Switzerland. 1993. (Price SwFr 30 plus postage).

As well as her accounts of the complexities of the genus *Rhymogona*, explored through studies of genitalia and enzyme electrophoresis, the author presented a preliminary list of Swiss diplopods to the 1990 Innsbruck conference. What we have now is a most impressive 248 page account of the millipedes of Switzerland including 127 species with distribution maps. Ariane Pedroli-Christen is indeed to be congratulated on this work.

In each case there are general comments on the species and its distribution, references, distribution in Switzerland and comments on ecology. The latter range from a few lines to half a page. The annexe has 25 km square distribution maps for each species, histograms showing relative abundance by faunistic regions and altitude and the total number of records. Appendix 2 is a factorial analysis of populations by regions, vegetation, openness of habitat and type of woodland. The text is in French with much of the discussion also in German.

The Swiss fauna is of interest both because of the diversity of habitats and topography with the likelihood of isolated populations and the occurrence of montane species and also its position in relation to the fauna of the more northerly and southern areas of western Europe.

British workers will find much useful material in this account. Many of the species are those which we have in these islands and the information will provide comparisons with our knowledge of them. Other species will help us to get a better idea of the European fauna without overwhelming us with large numbers of new families and genera. For instance this account includes 15 species of Glomerida including *Geoglomeris subterranea* (= *Stygioglomeris crinita*), a species of *Trachysphaera* and our familiar *Glomeris marginata*. The latter shows up as a distinctly western species found between 270 and 1800m 'trouvé son optimum à l'étage colineen mais évité les milieux les plus chauds'. There are another 10 species/subspecies of *Glomeris* listed whereas only seven Blaniulidae & Nemasomatidae are noted, six of which have been recorded from Britain. Families unfamiliar to British collectors are Neotractosomatidae, Mastigophyllidae and Trachygonidae (all Chordeumatida) and Callipodidae.

In her acknowledgements, the author thanks both her husband and her children 'qui ont très largement participé à cette aventure 'millepatologique'. Que la découverte de la Suisse de la montagne a travers ces 'petites bêtes' resté pour nous un souvenir lumineux !'. Memories of one's own children and looking for 'pedes' !

A.D.Barber

(Copies may be obtained from the CSCF as above - compared with so many books these days the price seems very reasonable.)