

Flutter's

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English

Flutters By

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Foreword

Butterflies and moths are one of the most threatened groups of wildlife. Butterflies are valuable indicators of the environment. They play an important role in pollination by pollinating a major portion of economically important crop. Owing to habitat destruction butterfly conservation is becoming highly essential in the current scenario. The knowledge of habitat and species –specific host plant is an important entity in conservation programs. The book is a compendium of articles on butterfly conservation. The articles discuss the diversity of butterflies, importance of conservation, defensive mechanisms, climate change and sustainable development. This compilation is an asset in conservation programs. I wish that this book would create a spark in conservation programs of butterfly. It is a blend of articles intricately webbed with discussions on all fields of contemporary issues.

Principal

Dr. Sr. Magie Jose

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**BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION: A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE
WITH RESPECT TO THE ROLE OF ECOLOGICAL
CONSTRAINTS**

Dr. Kezia Kuruvilla

The study of butterflies has contributed greatly to our understanding of its biology, ecology, biogeography and conservation (Wallace, 1865; Gilbert and Singer, 1975; Boggs *et al.*, 2003). Around 18000-20000 species of butterflies have been documented which exhibit latitudinal gradient in species diversity, with highest numbers in the tropics (Shields, 1989; Larsen, 2005). Pelham (2008) lists 800 species throughout the United States and Canada and Lamas (2004) reported 7784 species in the neotropics which indicate 90% of Americas butterfly species of having a tropical distribution. Similarly Tolman and Lewington (2008) list 440 species for Europe and Britain, compared to the roughly 4000 species found in the afrotropics (Larsen, 2005), again showing around 90% of butterfly species to be tropical.

US and UK butterfly conservation efforts are mainly species-specific, while tropical conservation dictate ‘habitat protection’ approaches with little regard to inclusion of information or tools from butterfly population level or species specific studies (New, 2009). Unlike the temperate areas, there are currently no butterfly distribution atlases and long-term monitoring schemes in the tropics.

The information on tropical butterflies is inadequate when compared to their temperate counterparts. This lacuna in knowledge will definitely reflect on the conservation measures designed and undertaken. Differences in the biology and ecology of butterflies of different geographical areas should be given due weightage during conservation.

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