

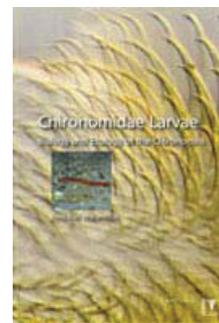
Book review

Henk K.M. Moller Pillot, 2009:

Chironomidae Larvae II – Biology and Ecology of the Chironomini

KNNV uitgeverij, Zeist, 288p. ISBN 978 90 5011 3038.

Order at <http://www.knnvuitgeverij.nl>, € 69.50



This comprehensive guide is a welcome addition to the library of any specialized chironomid worker: a detailed overview of the distribution and ecology of Chironomini living in the Netherlands and adjacent lowlands. Chapters 1 and 2 introduce the reader to the systematics and the general biology and ecology of the Chironomini, discussing the effects of a range of environmental parameters on the life cycle and occurrence of Chironomini.

Chapter 3 continues with extensive descriptions of the distribution, biology and ecology of each of the Chironomini species that have been found in and around the Netherlands. The guide contains a wealth of detailed ecological and biogeographical information. Effectively, the guide offers an overview of years and years of research results and accumulated expert knowledge of Moller Pillot and colleagues. It is hard to find publications with as complete a compilation of data as this series *Chironomidae Larvae* that combines detailed information with up-to-date references.

The downside of detail, however, is that the geographical range covered by this book is limited. Part of the observations that are true for water bodies in the Netherlands could be used outside the North-west European lowlands, but one should not rely on the guide too far away from this region. Species will likely show different ecological preferences living in habitats and conditions that are not found in the North-west European lowlands, such high altitudes, hard substratum or deep lakes.

Similar to *Chironomidae Larvae* part I, this second guide ends with a chapter of tables that summarize ecological information about life cycle and preferences with regards to food, habitat, oxygen levels, pH, and chlorinity and the ability to endure current and drying up of water bodies. The information is organized in a way that is comparable to the tables compiled by Moog (2002) for Austria and the overview in Merritt et al. (2008) for North America. This is a useful tool for water quality management and provides the (palaeo)worker with an easily accessible ecological overview.

A potential danger exists if these tables are applied for quantitative analysis and reconstruction of environments. Because of the way the data is presented (numbers in a table) it is tempting to interpret the values as quantitative data, especially for oxygen, pH and chlorinity. However, the data is pulled together from different (types of) sources that will have used different methods and sometimes are based on only a few observations. It does not become totally clear what parts of the data tables are based on field measurements, expert judgment, or estimations.

In short, part II of *Chironomidae Larvae* is a very useful book for the specialized (palaeo)chironomidologist who requires detailed ecological information about Chironomini in the Netherlands and surrounding lowlands - provided that caution is taken when using the data (semi-) quantitatively. For those readers that are more generally interested, however, the book is probably too much focused on one subfamily and too small a geographic region, especially as it lacks a chapter on general ecology as provided in part I.

Moog, O (2002) Fauna Aquatica Austriaca, Edition 2002. Wasserwirtschaftskataster, Bundesministerium für Land- und Forstwirtschaft, Umwelt und Wasserwirtschaft, Vienna.

Merritt, RW, Cummins KW, Berg, MB (2008) An introduction to the aquatic insects of North America, 4th edition. Kendall & Hunt, Dubuque.

Maarten van Hardenbroek