

BOOK REVIEW

Butterflies of Agastya

Author: Dr. R. Bhanumathi

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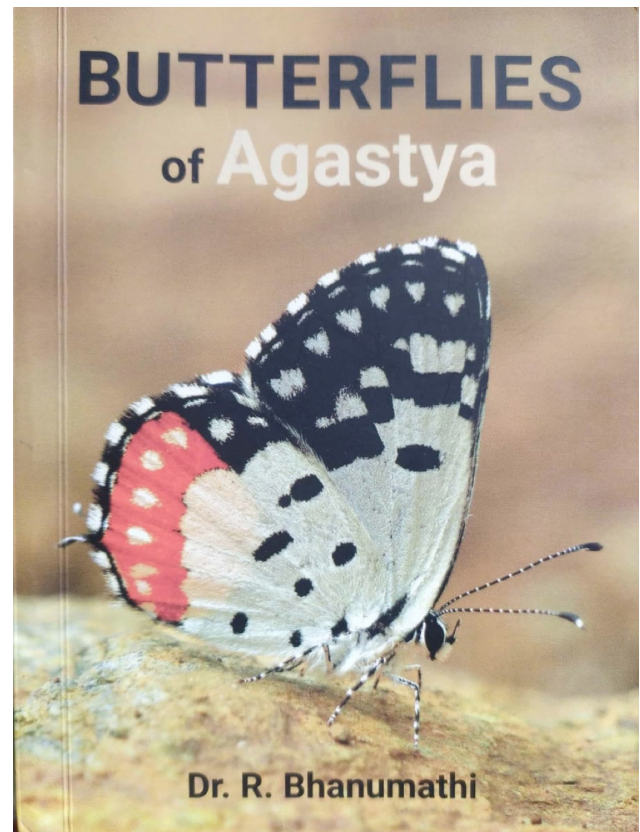
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Review by B.A. Daniel, Zoo Outreach Organization

This field guide to butterflies observed at Agastya International Foundation (AIF) is the third publication of the series by the author. AIF is located in Gudivanka village, Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh. The basis of this exceptional work is based on 15 months (from July 2015) of personal observation by the author on butterflies on the campus. She started the work initially just to do biodiversity documentation, later with the encouragement of the Foundation, it was made into a field guide. The Agastya campus is a semi-arid zone that has an elevation of 733 MSL alongside the Eastern Ghats. The author reports 104 butterflies along with photographs of dorsal and ventral views of 80 species.

I would say this is a very good reference book for beginners as the book has many interesting observations like congregation, basking, mud puddling, conservation needs, and also basic insect science such as morphology, life cycle, feeding, and larval host plants that will be very useful for the beginners. For easy reference, the families are given colour codes.

Information about species is spread across two pages with species information on the facing page with details such as common name, scientific name, wingspan,



description, behavior, and larval host plant and photographs of butterflies on the left side. The photos will help users to identify the species as some of the photos has highlights and inserts of important taxonomic morphological characters.

Dr. R. Bhanumathi is a nature educationist for over three decades. She has authored and co-authored many publications on nature in English and Tamil. This book is not for sale. If interested in availing a copy of the book, visit www.agastya.org and email to AIF.