

M 2414

Social Insect Defense Mechanisms

Defensive Mechanisms in Social Insects
Henry R. Hermann [ed.]
Praeger Publishers, New York, 1984, xii
+ 259 pp., \$38.95

Henry R. Hermann has once again edited another excellent work in his line of multi-authored books on social insects. This book is another example of the kind of quality work we have come to expect from Hermann. I sometimes wonder when he finds time to do his own research.

After an introductory chapter on defensive mechanisms, we are treated to successive chapters on defensive mechanisms in *Polistes* wasps, vespine wasps, ants, and termites. The final chapter is an

excellent discourse on the evolution of the sting apparatus of Aculeate Hymenoptera. Each of the authors is actively engaged in research in the subject, and much of the research presented remains unpublished. Many interesting unanswered questions and future research topics are presented to indicate subject areas needing work.

Although ca. 25% of the pictures are dark, this is a minor complaint when compared with the large amount of information synthesized and presented in this volume. Additionally, each chapter contains an up-to-date list of references. The chapter on ants presents a table listing the subfamilies, genera, and species mentioned; it is not a survey of ant systematics as stated in the text.

This book will be of interest to entomologists and ethologists in general in addition to those interested specifically in social insects. Graduate students will find it a good starting point to search the recent literature. All colleges and universities having programs in Entomology or Behavior should have this book in their libraries.

Daniel P. Wojcik
ARS-USDA
Insects Affecting Man
& Animals Res. Lab.
P.O. Box 14565
Gainesville, Fla.