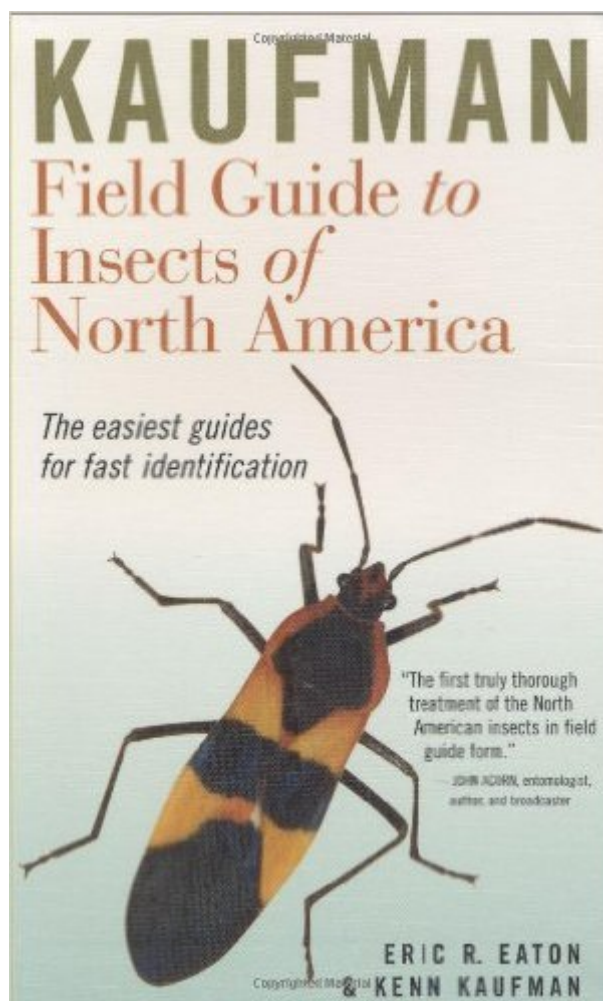


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Kaufman Field Guide To Insects Of North America (Kaufman Field Guides)



Synopsis

Comprehensive yet compact, authoritative yet easy to understand, this is the perfect guide for anyone who wants to know more about the fascinating and diverse insects of North America. Many insects are difficult even for the experts to identify, but here readers will find a wealth of information on the amazing observable behaviors of insects and their fascinating life histories. Naturalists Kenn Kaufman and Eric R. Eaton use a broad ecological approach rather than overly technical terms, making the book accessible and easy to use. Their lively and engaging text emphasizes the insects that are most likely to draw attention and also includes helpful details on a wide array of lesser-known but recognizable groups. The guide is lavishly illustrated, with more than 2,350 digitally enhanced photographs representing every major group of insects found in North America north of Mexico.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars See all reviews (96 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

This Field Guide sticks to the same tried and true format as the other Kaufman Field Guides (Birds, Butterflies, and Mammals). Every odd page is packed with digitally touched-up pictures of various insects and the even pages contain brief descriptions of the species/family, their habits, etc... Given the enormity of the insect fauna in North America north of Mexico (the region covered by this guide) it is obvious that a field guide such as this is not going to be able to cover but a fraction of what is out there. Additionally the target audience is not entomologists but rather more casual insect and

nature lovers. As a result the selection of insects that are covered is limited. The authors in the introduction state that the guide focuses on "naked-eye entomology". There are a few pages in the beginning devoted to non-insect invertebrates (spiders, millipedes, ...). It would have been nice if this section was a bit more comprehensive, then again maybe this foreshadows a future Kaufman Spiders field guide! The pictures are all very nice and the book overall is very pleasing to the eye. The cover and binding seem like they will stand up to field use. Overall I am very pleased with this book and would recommend it to anyone with an interest in insects.

Alas, a good insect field guide is hard to come by. When I ordered the Kaufman guide I was optimistic that it could replace the badly outdated Peterson's guide; sadly this is not the case. For a neophyte looking to ID your common backyard bugs this would suffice. There are plenty of wonderful pictures that can't otherwise be found in printed form. But for a serious student of entomology this 'guide' is of minimal use. There is virtually no information given to help in IDing a specimen. The guide goes with a purely visual approach which is simply not efficient for studying the great diversity of North American Hexapoda; unfortunately there is still no good choice for an up-to-date compact guide. For exhaustiveness, try picking up a copy of Borror & DeLong's. Even with its faults, I would still recommend picking this one up. The Kaufman guide is a good value, even if it will only be useful for the weekend entomologists out there.

I see several reviews that indicate that information is lacking in this field guide. Well, it's a FIELD guide to the insects of North America. This is quite a daunting task. When I ordered this book, I was dubious that this book could fill this niche any better than any of the other field guide sized books on insects of this huge region. I was pleasantly surprised. In my opinion, this guide does an excellent job of covering species one is likely to encounter, but also representatives of strange or unusual species. Yes, it's a little skimpy on detailed information, but that is what is required in bringing a survey of biodiversity this variable to the field. As far as I know, there are no guides of any kind that provide range maps for all these (some little known) taxa. Yes, some well-known groups have useful range maps, but these are guides (and sometimes full-sized books) that deal with a single order of insects. If you want a book small enough to take into the field, with an excellent representation of images for this highly diverse group of animals, this is the best I've used. Or, if you want an inexpensive and accessible resource to identify that brown, six-legged thing in your bath tub, this might be what you're looking for. If you are looking for a comprehensive reference on the diversity of insect life in North America, with images, range maps, keys, natural history, etc...., keep looking and

let me know when you find one. I'm not an entomologist, but have completed graduate course work in entomology.

The pictures in this book are wonderful, the info is solid, but where are distribution maps, or any helpful info for finding the specimen? There is the occasional "It occurs in most of the mideastern states" or something along that line, but that's not narrow enough for me, plus all the info on the insects is just a paragraph or two about that insect family, not really specifying on individuals. All in all it's a very nice book, but I guess I was looking forward to more, and I was let down, but I would still recommend it to anyone who is interested in seeing beautiful insect pictures and learning the very basic information about them.

I think this book is perfect. It has just enough of everything so that the book is affordable and light enough to really be a FIELD guide. The pictures are terrific...there are just enough on a page so your eye can easily scan when you are looking for a particular insect. This guide has about 400 pages and more than 2,350 images so OF COURSE it isn't going to have lots of details about every insect. And since, according to one reviewer, there are about 10,000 insects in North America, OF COURSE it isn't going to have every insect. What it DOES have is enough illustrations so you can find something VERY close if you can't find the exact insect. With that information, you can go to the internet and look up the details without wading through lots of irrelevant material--I was spending FAR too much time on whatsthatbug dot com and bugguide dot net before I got this book. This is the handiest insect book I have had since I was about 6 and wore out my Golden Guide! If you are debating about getting the book, just do it--it's only about \$13 and this is --you can send it back if you don't like it. I'm betting you won't be sending it back.

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