

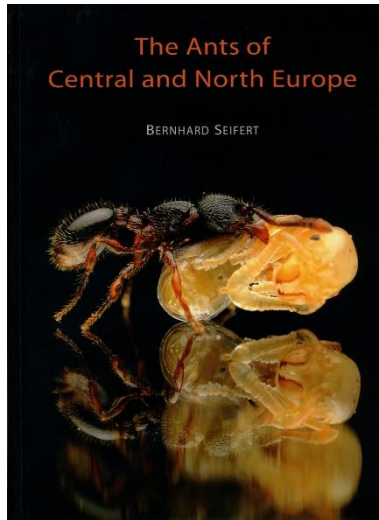


## BOOK REVIEW

*Bulletin de la Société royale belge d'Entomologie / Bulletin van de Koninklijke Belgische Vereniging voor Entomologie, 156 (2020): 149*

### **Seifert B., 2018. - The Ants of Central and North Europe. Lutra Verlags- und Vertriebsgesellschaft, Taur, 408 pp.**

ISBN 978-3-936412-07-9. Orders can be placed online by [www.veldshop.nl](http://www.veldshop.nl) for 69,00 EUR, and by [www.vermandel.com](http://www.vermandel.com) for 64,00 EUR.



Throughout the centuries, Europe has known a wide range of renowned myrmecologists, some of whom have compiled very valuable identification tables for ants. It is a discipline that is constantly evolving together with the increasing knowledge of the newly coming species and as well as the shifts within the taxonomic classification. Determination tables by Bernard Seifert and his numerous publications that delve deeper into specific traits within a genus or a species-group are trusted tools for anyone studying the ant fauna of Europe. In 1996 he presented us his first book 'Ameisen, beobachten, bestimmen' supplemented and improved with 'Die Ameisen Mittel- und Nordeuropas' in 2007. His latest book in English 'The Ants of Central and North Europe' published in 2018 will reach a wider scientific audience.

This publication is divided into two parts: a general and a special part.

The general part with topics such as body structure and function, habitat choice, colony structure, parasitism, feeding strategies and relationships with other organisms presents an instructive overview of the biology of ants. The special part itself can be divided into two topics: the determination keys and discussion, a part in which the genera and species are discussed in detail, including additional information on taxonomy, distribution, population structure, nutrition and behaviour.

In a separate appendix the morphometric characteristics used in the determination key are precisely defined. Seifert places special emphasis on the fact that all measurements must be carried out on completely dry, prepared specimens. The morphometric data are an important criterion in Seifert's determination. The morphology-based alpha taxonomy (MOBAT) was, due to its limited application extended to what he calls Numeric Morphology-Based Alpha-Taxonomy (NUMOBAT), a procedure that can be very labour-intensive, but is necessary, according to Seifert, to achieve correct species determination. Applying the NUMOBAT method not only requires properly prepared specimens but also a suitable stereo microscope with sufficient magnification and measuring function.

This is obviously not a field guide but a publication that is indispensable for the accurate determination of collection material. The book is also very valuable because of the extensive list of references that are a great help for detailed studies. It is a very valuable tool in the study of European ants in which beautiful and detailed images are of great added value. This publication should therefore not be absent from any myrmecologist library. Highly recommended!

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