

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln

Armand R. Maggenti Online Dictionary of
Invertebrate Zoology

Parasitology, Harold W. Manter Laboratory of

October 2008

Review of the "Online Dictionary of Invertebrate Zoology" from *Parasites & Vectors*

Les Chappell
University of Aberdeen

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/onlinedictinvertzoology>



Part of the [Zoology Commons](#)

Chappell, Les, "Review of the "Online Dictionary of Invertebrate Zoology" from *Parasites & Vectors*" (2008). *Armand R. Maggenti Online Dictionary of Invertebrate Zoology*. 23.

<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/onlinedictinvertzoology/23>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Parasitology, Harold W. Manter Laboratory of at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in Armand R. Maggenti Online Dictionary of Invertebrate Zoology by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

This Provisional PDF corresponds to the article as it appeared upon acceptance. Fully formatted PDF and full text (HTML) versions will be made available soon.

Review of "Online Dictionary of Invertebrate Zoology: Complete Work" by Mary Ann (Basinger) Maggenti, Armand R Maggenti and Scott Lyell Gardner

Parasites & Vectors 2008, **1**:38 doi:10.1186/1756-3305-1-38

Les Chappell (l.h.chappell@abdn.ac.uk)

ISSN 1756-3305

Article type Book review

Submission date 17 September 2008

Acceptance date 14 October 2008

Publication date 14 October 2008

Article URL <http://www.parasitesandvectors.com/content/1/1/38>

This peer-reviewed article was published immediately upon acceptance. It can be downloaded, printed and distributed freely for any purposes (see copyright notice below).

Articles in *Parasites & Vectors* are listed in PubMed and archived at PubMed Central.

For information about publishing your research in *Parasites & Vectors* or any BioMed Central journal, go to

<http://www.parasitesandvectors.com/info/instructions/>

For information about other BioMed Central publications go to

<http://www.biomedcentral.com/>

© 2008 Chappell, licensee BioMed Central Ltd.

This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

**Review of *Online Dictionary of Invertebrate Zoology: Complete Work*
by Mary Ann (Basinger) Maggenti, Armand R. Maggenti and Scott
Lyell Gardner (editor)**

Les Chappell

School of Biological Sciences, University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen, AB24 2TZ, UK

Correspondence: l.h.chappell@abdn.ac.uk

Book Details

Maggenti M A (Basinger), Maggenti A R and Gardner S L (editor):

Online Dictionary of Invertebrate Zoology: Complete Work

<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/onlinedictinvertzoology/2/> version 2.1 July 2008

Review

The revised fifth edition (version 2.1 posted July 2008) of this on-line dictionary of invertebrate zoology is available for free consultation on <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/onlinedictinvertzoology/2/> (The Manter Laboratory and the University of Nebraska Digital Commons website). It is also possible to purchase the hard cover version (<http://www.lulu.com/content20806140>) or the paperback (<http://www.lulu.com/content/3799861>).

The online version describes itself as ‘the complete work’ which gives access to all 963 pages on down-loading. It is also possible to down-load individual alphabetic entries, a facility that might be preferred by those with slow computing who may not wish to access the entire dictionary. The complete version is 963 pages long with approximately 12 entries per page. It is claimed to contain over 13,000 entries, and I am prepared to believe this. Where appropriate, each definition is accompanied by very brief notes on etymology and derivation as well as context of use; in addition, the authors state that they have used the original definitions wherever possible. The entries encompass the basic biology of 31 invertebrate phyla and this does seem to be a remarkably comprehensive reference work.

To make all entries readily accessible there is a page containing A-Z hotlinks to the appropriate section. This allows the browser to jump forward to the desired letter. Moving backwards and forwards through the text is achieved either by scrolling using the page arrows or by opening the bookmark facility on the left of the screen and

selecting the letter of choice. Thus, navigating is straightforward once you are aware of these pdf reader buttons.

This is a very useful dictionary, one which I wish I had had access to when, as an undergraduate student of zoology, I was required to consult Hyman's intensely erudite prose and needed serious assistance in the explication of countless seemingly obscure terms. One obvious question for any new on-line database must be whether it reproduces other more generic databases. For instance, I selected rather at random a number of terms from the dictionary and entered them into a Google search. In each case I retrieved multiple responses as one might predict and, in some cases, I would have needed to have some prior knowledge to identify the most appropriate definition. Thus, although the internet now seems to be omniscient, a focused dictionary has considerable value. I therefore recommend that all invertebrate zoologists, old or young, mark the URL for this dictionary in their favourites section and use it whenever an unfamiliar (or even supposedly familiar) term is encountered or used.

I am of a vintage and disposition where I still prefer my reference books to be bound by card and printed on paper. Nevertheless, as I, like most of my colleagues, spend hours per day at my computer it seems obvious to use on-line resources in preference. I sigh at this a little since books feel and smell like friends whereas the World Wide Web has a slightly sinister side. It is, of course, quite feasible to print the on-line dictionary in your office and at four dictionary pages per printed page it is quite readable although obviously a little bulky at 240 pages of A4. Alternatively, you might wish to avail yourself of the printed version via the web-links as indicated above and at a price.

Competing interests

The author declares that he has no competing interests.