

Book Review

EVANS, H. E. 1966. The comparative ethology and evolution of the sand wasps. 526 pp. Harvard University Press.

H. E. Evans is well known for his studies of various solitary wasps, especially "sand wasps" (Nyssoninae). We find in this latter group a particularly high proportion of very original, or specialized, or evolved traits of behavior (some of which even suggest a comparison with social or sub-social forms). We can mention for example: night clustering; oviposition in an empty cell (instead of on a prey); special behavior related to the larva such as provisioning it day after day (instead of "mass provisioning", prior to hatching of the larva); cell cleaning, etc.; the range of prey selection tends also to be wider than in many other groups of Sphecids; some *Microbembix* accept all kinds of insects (occasionally other arthropods, such as spiders, etc.) and are scavengers.

Thus the study of this group is particularly interesting *per se* and also with respect to the evolution of some features in the entire group of Sphecoidea (and perhaps even in some social or sub-social forms).

H. E. Evans has gathered, discussed, compared, and evaluated carefully the different elements of information concerning this group and at times even other groups, when useful; he emphasizes also the need for additional information and experimentation. The integration of these various elements leads to a final general synthesis, and also to appealing working hypotheses. The conclusions are established on a wide base including for example morphology of adults, larvae and cocoons, fossils, phylogenetic and zoogeographical considerations, and especially ecological and ethological features. The illustrations and especially the photographs, are excellent and attractive.

This very good book is particularly interesting and useful for students of the behavior of insects and the puzzling complexity of this at the level of the higher Hymenoptera.

André L. Steiner
Department of Zoology
University of Alberta



Steiner, André L. 1967. "Review of The comparative ethology and evolution of the sand wasps by H. E. Evans." *Quaestiones entomologicae* 3(2), 106–106.

View This Item Online: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/208744>

Permalink: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/204135>

Holding Institution

Smithsonian Libraries and Archives

Sponsored by

Biodiversity Heritage Library

Copyright & Reuse

Copyright Status: In Copyright. Digitized with the permission of the rights holder

Rights Holder: University of Alberta

License: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/>

Rights: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/permissions/>

This document was created from content at the **Biodiversity Heritage Library**, the world's largest open access digital library for biodiversity literature and archives. Visit BHL at <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org>.