

# BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS HARMFUL TO HUMAN HEALTH

## Summary

A review of information on diseases caused by butterflies and moths (Lepidoptera) on human health is presented. Various symptoms grouped under the terms such as lepidopterism and erucism may have different origin and underlying mechanisms. In particular there are described: influence of blood sucking and lacrimophagic moths, cutaneous symptoms like contact dermatitis caused by caterpillar urticating hairs, influence of urticating hairs on human eyes (*ophthalmia nodosa*), a syn-

drome caused by caterpillars of genus *Lonomia*. Some other symptoms caused by caterpillars including: ataxic syndrome, arthritis, pulmonary reactions (including bronchial asthma) as well as the functioning of Lepidoptera as the vectors for parasites are also discussed. The information on toxic and venomous Lepidoptera in Polish fauna is compiled. Preventive methods that may help to avoid the contact with those species and help to make an accurate diagnosis and further treatment are finally discussed.