

BOOK REVIEW

Beetles of Eastern North America

Evans A. V., 2014. Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, USA. 560 pp.
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The beetles (Coleoptera) are the largest and most diverse group of animals on the planet. Writing about them is not an easy task, even for a respected coleopterologist, such as Arthur V. Evans. The “Beetles of Eastern North America”, a comprehensive, full-colour book covering more than 1400 species and 115 families of beetles from Eastern North America, is trying to do just that.

Despite the vast topic, the entire book is characterised by a simple and readable style. It is evident how the author wants to offer to the reader the most complete portrait on beetles, in particular adding some unique chapters that even experts can appreciate, for example about the ethics of collecting and the possible effects on threatened populations. Each family description is rich of taxonomic information, useful curiosities, and practical suggestions on collecting methods and conservation notes on endemic and non-native species.

The book has been written as a practical tool for professional biologists and also to engage amateur naturalists and students. The aim is mainly achieved by the 1500 brilliant colour pictures that the reader will love while consulting the guide. For using the book in a professional environment, it would have to be combined with a more accurate key for coleopteran families, because the identification key is too simplified, insomuch that sometimes it is difficult to identify some important families (e.g. Cryptophagidae).

Nevertheless, the guide is an indispensable and incomparable book for amateur entomologists and students around the world.

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