



Ecology, Systematics, and the Natural History of Predaceous Diving Beetles (Coleoptera: Dytiscidae)

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Predaceous diving beetles (Coleoptera: Dytiscidae) constitute one of the largest families of freshwater insects (~ 4,200 species). Although dytiscid adults and larvae are ubiquitous throughout a variety of aquatic habitats and are significant predators on other aquatic invertebrates and vertebrates, there are no compilations that have focused on summarizing the knowledge of their ecology, systematics, and biology. Such knowledge would benefit anyone working in aquatic systems where dytiscids are an important part of the food web. Moreover, this work will allow a greater appreciation of dytiscids as model organisms for investigations of fundamental principles derived from ecological and evolutionary theory. Contributed chapters are by authors who are actively engaged in studying dytiscids and each chapter offers a synthesis of the current knowledge of a variety of topics and will provide future directions for research.

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Editorial Review

From the Back Cover

This comprehensive book provides one of the most complete overviews of the aquatic beetles in the family Dytiscidae, also known as predaceous diving beetles. Dytiscids constitute one of the largest families of freshwater insects with approximately 4,200 named species that come in a variety of sizes, colors, and habitat affinities. Although dytiscid adults and larvae are ubiquitous throughout a variety of aquatic habitats, and are important predators on other aquatic invertebrates and vertebrates, there are no compilations that have focused on summarizing the knowledge on aspects of their ecology, systematics, and biology. Chapters in this book summarize hitherto scattered topics, including their anatomy and habitats, chemical and community ecology, phylogenies and larval morphology including chaetotaxy, sexual systems, predation, dispersal, conservation, and cultural and historical aspects. This knowledge is potentially beneficial to anyone working in aquatic systems where dytiscids are an important part of the food web. Moreover, readers will gain a greater appreciation of dytiscids as model organisms for investigations of fundamental principles derived from ecological and evolutionary theory. Contributed chapters are by authors who are actively engaged in studying dytiscids, and each chapter provides color photos and future directions for research.

About the Author

Although his primary research focus involves medically important container mosquitoes, he is broadly a community ecologist who has a strong, broad background in invertebrates and aquatic habitats. He has focused most of his research efforts on mosquitoes, in part because this group provides an excellent model system to explore topics across many levels of ecological organization, from individuals, to population, to communities. His specific interests lie in examining how individual species traits, such as feeding behavior, habitat selection, dispersal and oviposition decisions affect species interactions and in linking how the outcomes of these interactions affect patterns of species diversity and invasion success. This work has important implications for public health, as findings of his work can offer insights into the factors that control the distributions of medically important mosquitoes.

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