

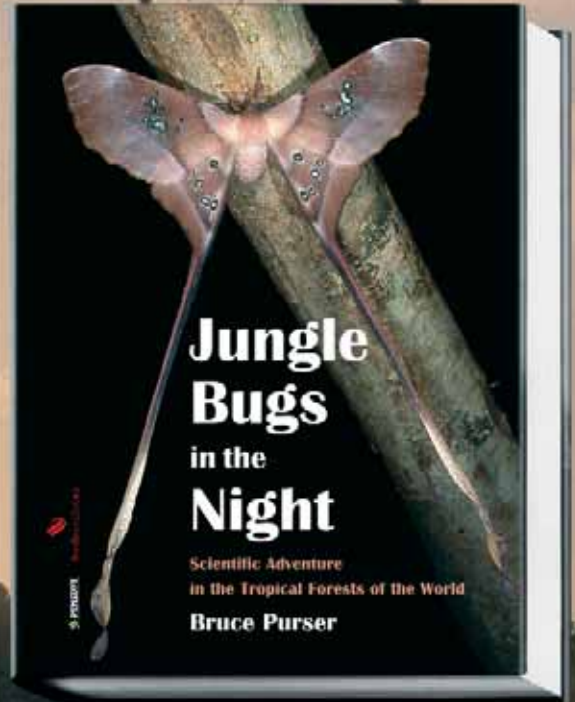
Purser, B. 2007. Jungle Bugs in the Night. Scientific Adventure in Tropical Forests of the World

Pensoft Publishers (ISBN 954-642-282-7) & BainBridgeBooks (ISBN 1-891696-21-1), Sofia-Moscow-Philadelphia, 210 x 290, full-color album with excellent original photos of the author, glossary. In English. Hardback, 168 pp. EURO 38.

Contents: Preface / Chapter 1: An Introduction to the Jungle & its Night-life / Chapter 2: Observing Jungle Bugs in the Night / Chapter 3: The Incredible Diversity of Jungle Bugs / Chapter 4: Nocturnal Behaviour of Jungle Bugs / Chapter 5: Strange Bugs in the Night / Chapter 6: Jungle Bugs all through the Night / Epilogue: A Plea for the Bugs / Glossary

This beautifully illustrated book comprises 297 photos of living insects and spiders, demonstrating a little known aspect of entomology for there exists no popular literature treating the nocturnal activities of these fascinating creatures. Few have had the time – or courage – to carry a camera quietly through the jungle at night. The text and photos introduce the reader to the various types of tropical forest and their smaller inhabitants. A chapter illustrates the many ways in which one may observe nocturnal life in the jungle, and the special techniques necessary to photograph bugs and vegetation in these dripping forests. Together with its photos, this book will be of considerable interest to Nature photographers. Two chapters are devoted to the more unexpected facets of nocturnal life: colour, structure and, especially, behaviour, aspects which are rarely – if ever – treated in text-books. Photography of these reclusive creatures has involved many patient hours of standing and sitting quietly within the darkened forests of Australia, New Guinea, Malaysia, Madagascar, West Africa, Central America and, especially, Amazonia. Observation has involved many long nights, from sunset to dawn, at altitudes varying from sea-level to 4000 meters, at temperatures ranging from 30° to near zero. The variety and behaviour of jungle bugs under these highly variable conditions give the reader a very good insight into the private lives of these creatures. All photos have been taken by the author, each photo being discussed and integrated in the adjacent text; in that a good photo is worth a thousand words, this text is reduced to a minimum. However, humorous incidents and personal remarks have not been neglected, these making reading agreeable. The author, a Naturalist from birth, has worked (and lived) in tropical forests for nearly 50 years. An experienced photographer and scientist, he describes his scientific observations and experiences in a language which all, both amateur and professional, will appreciate.

A NEW BOOK ON TROPICAL INSECTS!



Diverse mouth structures: the spiders' fangs

Neither shape nor colour rarely indicate family affinity. However, certain structural properties, such as mouth and arrangement on the cymbium, are generally reliable keys in the classification of arachnids. The arachnids (spiders) have well developed fangs, illustrated in these two photos. They are generally used to grab and kill prey but are not normally used to masticate food. The fangs may be very big, especially in the tarantula spiders (see above). However, in spite of their fearsome appearance, the owner is not particularly aggressive if handled with care. The somewhat smaller individual (left), when disturbed, simply warned me by tapping on my finger with its front legs.



Photos 65: Diversity among the insects and spiders is clearly expressed by their varying types of feeding apparatus. Spiders, shown in these photos, may have impressive fangs. In the upper photo – looking into the mygalid's mouth – the

jointless-long fangs are rather frightening (photo taken at Caracas, Venezuela). In the lower photo, from the Brazilian Amazon, the four eyes and curved jaws are very apparent.

Feeding structures: mandibles & rostrum

Most beetles have fairly strong jaws which, unlike the spider's fangs, are used for cutting food; they are true feeding structures. Many have very strong mandibles (jaws), often being the case for long-horned beetles (Cerambycidae) which do not hesitate to bite when handled. Other insects such as cicadas have no true mouth; food is obtained via a rigid tube or rostrum (photo 67) which is forced into the bark or stem in order to drain sap from the plant. Although cicadas are very common in tropical forests, they are high in the trees where their feeding habits are rarely observed. At night they are readily attracted by light.

Photo 66: The jaws of longhorn beetles are particularly interesting. This photo shows the massive jaws of the Titanus beetle, photographed at Palau, French Guiana. The beetle is very aggressive when handled, the jaws being capable of severing a wooden pencil; length of jaws, 1 cm.

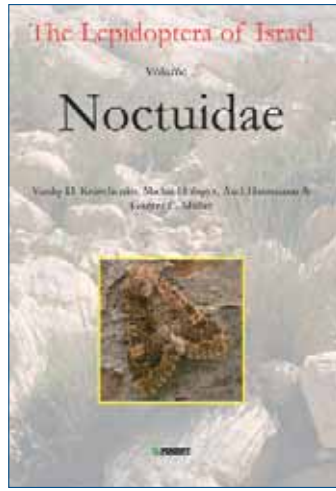


Photos 67: Cicadas, shown in these two photos, do not have jaws. They feed by forcing their rigid rostrum (jaws) into trees and shrubs from which they extract sap. The photo (left) shows a cicada feeding on a shrub near Portorua, New Zealand. The other (right) is a giant cicada illustrating the rostrum (jaws) of a cicada which feed to the lamp at Gua Musang (Malacca), NE Malaysia; length of rostrum, 18 mm.

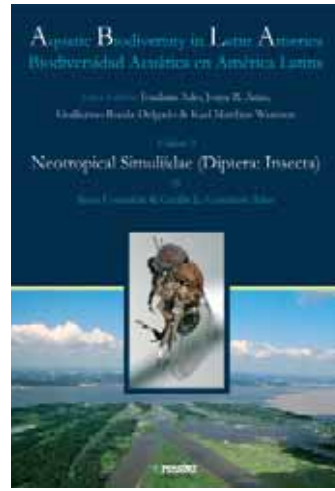




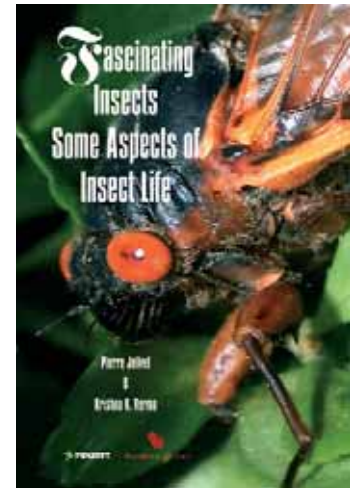
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