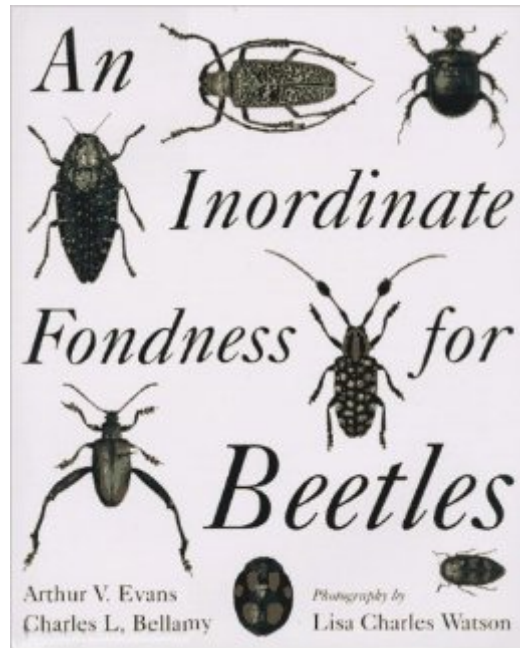


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# An Inordinate Fondness For Beetles (Henry Holt Reference Book)



## Synopsis

A Choice Outstanding Academic Book, 1997A Library Journal Best Reference Book of 1996.

## Book Information

Series: Henry Holt Reference Book

Hardcover: 208 pages

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Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (23 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,053,711 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #22 in [Books > Science & Math > Nature & Ecology > Field Guides > Insects & Spiders](#) #477 in [Books > Science & Math > Biological Sciences > Biology > Entomology](#) #527 in [Books > Science & Math > Biological Sciences > Animals > Insects & Spiders](#)

## Customer Reviews

The photographs by Lisa Watson are the first thing to catch your eye about this beautifully produced book. The majority are of museum specimens, which oddly is what makes the pictures so attractive: we're used to seeing high quality pictures of wildlife, but the displays here juxtapose many different beetles and have more impact than wildlife shots would. The pictures are beautiful but the text is high-quality too. The authors start by reciting some statistics on the number of beetle species. Linnaeus, two hundred and fifty years ago, described 654 species; and Fabricius added another 4,112 species between 1775 and 1801. By 1876 Gemminger and von Harold's catalog contained nearly 77,000 species; and when Junk and Schenkling's catalogue was completed, in 1940, it listed nearly 221,500 species. It's now estimated that there are 350,000 described beetle species. However, recent work by Terry Erwin, extrapolating from detailed studies of a small area, suggests that there are more than eight \*million\* species of beetle just in the tropics! The rest of the book is a fairly detailed survey of beetles in all their aspects. The authors are enthusiasts as well as experts, and it shows in their writing, which is crisp, clear and engaging. They cover beetle anatomy, fossilized beetles, habitats and niches, the beetle life cycle, and mimicry. There is also substantial coverage of beetles and humans: naming, appearance in mythology, use as jewels (really!), a

discussion of pest control, and use in education. The book has more scientific depth than is usual for a coffee table book, without sacrificing interest value. There is a website that appears to be maintained by one of the authors (Evans) that contains some material from the book; I recommend you take a look if you are hesitating about buying this. I found it by searching for the book title using a standard search engine; when I looked it was on the Lorquin Entomological Society's website, but it may have moved. Recommended.

I have read large numbers of insect books, and this is my absolute favorite. Cover to cover, it is an interesting and informative book. The photography is simply stunning and amazing, and the text is easy to read and well planned to cater to the well informed entomologist and amateur alike. It describes all aspects of beetle lives, with special emphasis on how many beetles there are in the world and how they effect human cultures in ways we rarely notice. Anyone who has any interest in beetles, insects in general, or excellent photography should get ahold of a copy of this book. I assure you that you won't regret it!

If a single example of every living species, plant and animal, were lined up, every fifth organism would be a beetle! This amazingly beautiful book combines fascinating natural history about the most common form of life on earth with spectacular photographs. Brings the appreciation of beetles closer to the way many of us already feel about birds, butterflies and wildflowers. Look closely--beauty lies beneath our feet. This is a coffee table art book simply in a class by itself. It is rich in content as well as beauty

If someone said, "Ok, you're being sent to a colony on Jupiter's second moon and you only get to bring one picture book with you," this would be it. It is a stunning book. One reviewer mentioned being moved to tears, and it really is no joke. The photos of the beetles are gorgeous and the text is really well written. People generally fear insects, regard them as pests, or don't bother thinking about them at all. Arthur Evans gives weight to what is frequently overlooked. Taking one order, Coleoptera (beetles), he uses it as a means to discuss the big picture on Earth--balance and biodiversity. Evans manages all of this with a sense of reverence and even spirituality that complements the statistics and hard data:"...But viewing beetles simply as machines, without understanding their role in the ecosystem, is a narrow perspective that reflects intellectual, spatial, and temporal limitations. As the world's ecosystems continue to shrink in the wake of human exploitation--a direct result of our ever-burgeoning population--our approach to all the sciences must

continue to evolve from an analysis of parts to a necessarily more holistic approach. We must learn to view beetles not as machines, but as conduits of energy flowing through the entire biosphere."I'd always been fascinated by insects, but this book really honed my interest and since I bought it, it has inspired me to learn more about them and share what I've learned. I even had the great luck of meeting a weevil expert. Beetles are simply incredible little animals and I'm really glad that Evans has written a book about them that is so accessible and lovely.

Not only does this book have absolutely gorgeous photographs of many species of beetles, the factual content of the book is also very good. Not dumbed down, yet not inaccessible by the general public. Overall Excellent!

This is one of the most gorgeous books I own. I look at these pictures, and I think that human beings could not dream up jewelry that touches the beauty of these creatures. It is utterly unbelievable! Every time I page through this book my jaw is open in disbelief. They are so breathtaking they almost bring tears to my eyes. Okay. Confession time. They HAVE brought tears to my eyes.

The website for this book and the general topic is:[...]

I'm a big fan of Darwin and the Theory of Evolution. The quote that is the title of this book is one I've known about for a long time. So when I saw the book I ordered it. Beautifully made, the photos are striking and perfect to look at and linger over. My hidden agenda for this book is for when I become a grandfather ( 3-6 years from now ). In my mind's eye I see my grandchild, eyes wide as saucers, looking at page after page of beetles and being amazed and asking LOTS of question. Nothing better in the world and it keeps us both off the internet :). Jacob

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