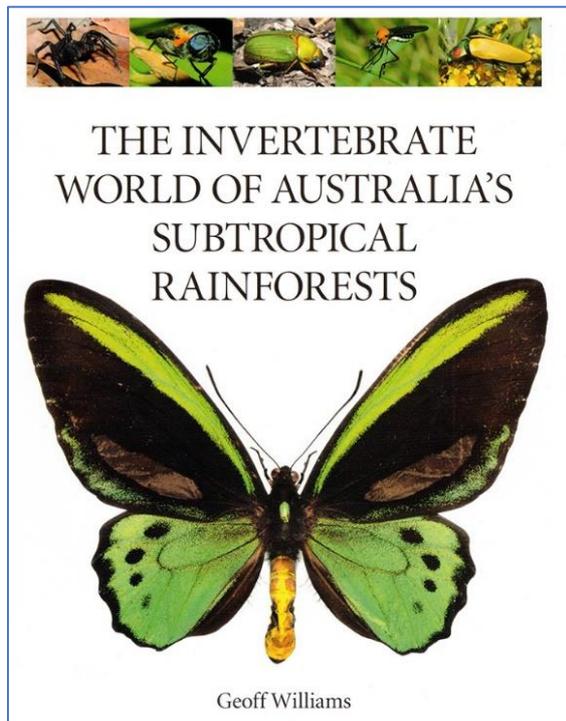


BOOK REVIEW**The Invertebrate World of Australia's Subtropical Rainforests****Geoff Williams**

Hardback | September 2020 | \$195.00
 ISBN: 9781486312917 | 392 pages | 270 x 210 mm
 Publisher: CSIRO Publishing
 Colour photographs, Maps



This well produced book attempts to explain the greatly over-looked invertebrate fauna of the temperate rainforests of Eastern Australia. The range of highly complex topics discussed at a quite advanced level is almost intimidating and each could warrant a book of its own.

The first chapter defines the forests in terms of Australian biogeographical history overlaid with the complexity of changing climate, giving numerous faunal examples. The second chapter covers the flora of the various types of forests, with some discussion on the endangered status of these forests, the effects of fragmentation and invasive species. Chapter three deals with the importance of invertebrates especially with regards to their important pollination role.

The fourth and final chapter gives an overview of the different taxa including short sections on the Platyhelminths, Nemertea, Nematoda,

Annelida and Crustacea, with somewhat more detail on the Chelicerata, Uniramia and Mollusca, giving examples of several families and their place within the forest fauna. The insects are covered in similar detail but due to their diversity and abundance occupy the greater part of this chapter. An overview of the biology, zoogeography and current distribution is provided at various taxonomic levels from Order to subfamily, sometimes even to species.

The book is expansive in the range of issues covered and written with many scientific names and terms. It would probably be a hard, but still interesting, read for the non-scientist. It would not be useful as a field guide although there are some 300 coloured photos of various taxa, and it was never intended as such.

The author clearly has a very broad, as well as deep, knowledge of the invertebrate fauna of eastern Australian subtropical rainforests and one is left in no doubt as to the diversity and importance of invertebrate life within them. It is made clear how inadequately we understand these forests and the complexity of interactions that may be much more important to the survival of the forests than any of us realise.

Graeme Smith