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## PREFACE

This is the first in a series of three volumes on Australian Coleoptera. It is based in part on Lawrence and Britton (1994), which, in turn, was an expanded version of the chapter on Coleoptera in the *Insects of Australia* (Lawrence and Britton 1991). It differs from the 1994 book in the following respects: (1) the family sections are greatly expanded, with the abbreviated family diagnoses replaced by full descriptions of adults and larvae, comments added on the world distribution of each family, and a complete list included of Australian genera with their authors; (2) the section on fossil history is expanded to include all significant fossil literature on Coleoptera from various regions, but with an emphasis on the Mesozoic Era; and (3) ~1175 figures are included of adults, larvae and anatomical structures. The volume contains keys to all families and many subfamilies, tribes and distinctive genera, based on adults and larvae (292 and 281 couplets, respectively), but there are no subfamily or tribal keys included in the family sections. The following abbreviations throughout the text and keys for Australian states and territories: ACT (Australian Capital

Territory), NSW (New South Wales), NT (Northern Territory), QLD (Queensland), SA (South Australia), VIC (Victoria) and WA (Western Australia).

Volumes 2 and 3 of this series will be multiauthored with invited specialists from various parts of the world providing sections similar to those in Arnett and Thomas (2001) and Arnett *et al.* (2002), with adult keys to all genera occurring in Australia and some subfamily or tribal keys based on larvae when possible. It is planned that Volume 2 will include Archostemata, Myxophaga, Adepaga, Hydrophiloidea, Staphylinoidea and Scarabaeoidea, and Volume 3 will include Scirtoidea, Dascilloidea, Buprestoidea, Byrrhoidea, Elateroidea, Derodontoidea, Bostrichoidea, Lymexyloidea, Cleroidea, Cucujoidea, Tenebrionoidea and Chrysomeloidea. Curculionoidea will not be covered in these volumes, since some curculionoid families have been treated in the published volumes of *Australian Weevils* (Zimmerman 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994a, 1994b) and others will be covered in further volumes authored by R. G. Oberprieler.