

4. Diversity, distribution and conservation biology

Four worldwide genera of Elachistinae are recognised in this volume. Three of them occur in Australia: *Urodeta*, *Perittia* and *Elachista*. The genera *Urodeta* and *Perittia* are small, with only two and three Australian species currently recognised, respectively. The vast majority of Australian Elachistinae species belong to the genus *Elachista*. Of the five recognised subgenera of *Elachista*, only *Atachia* and *Elachista* are recognised from

Australia. 143 species are recognised, representing about 20% of the world species of the genus *Elachista* as a whole, and 85% of the known species of the subgenus *Atachia*. Globally, the whole subfamily shows a reversed diversity pattern (Powell *et al.* 1998), with the largest species diversity found in temperate regions and a very small number of species in the tropics. Most known elachistine species in the tropics occur at high altitudes.

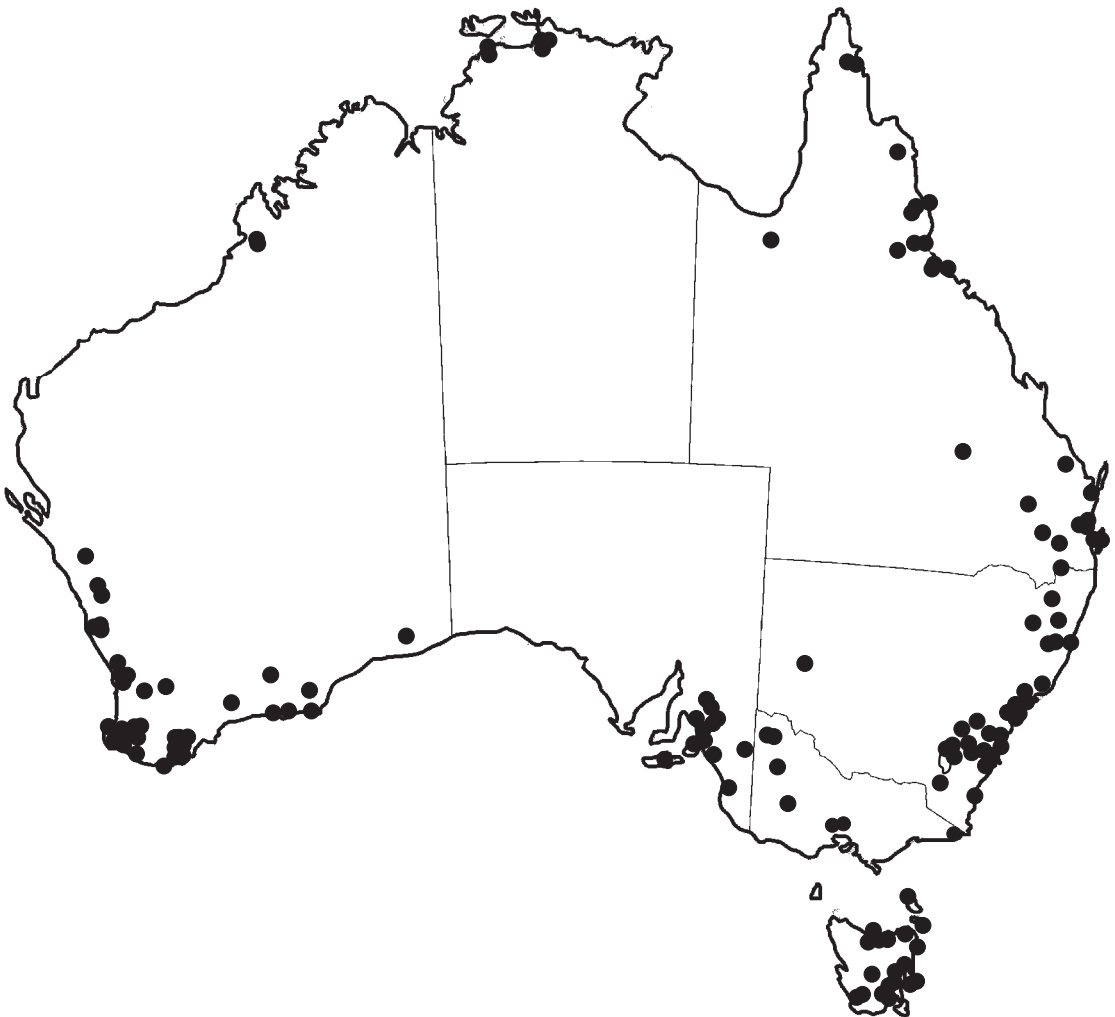


Fig. 48: Distribution of observations of the Elachistinae in Australia and Tasmania. Records from Lord Howe Island are included in this volume but not shown in the map.