

Preface

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Several years ago I was intrigued by the variation of mouthparts in larval and adult Coleoptera that feed on fungi. I was struck by the frequent close correlation between mouthpart structures and the texture of the material fed upon. I wondered how these structures vary within monophyletic groups and what the implications of this variation might be for ecological relationships. The culmination of these observations is included in my work in this volume.

I attended a symposium at the 1988 International Congress of Entomology in Vancouver and paid particular attention to a lecture given by Carl Schaefer. He spoke about the patterns of feeding behavior in Heteroptera. I met him the following year, and we began to organize this symposium by inviting several people we thought might be interested in participating.

Just before the symposium (held at the 1989 Entomological Society of America annual meeting at San Antonio, Texas) Carl, myself, and the other participants met to discuss the importance of studies of form and function regarding insect feeding. We agreed that investigations of trophic structures of insects are fundamental for understanding evolutionary diversification of insects. But we were surprised that only a few entomologists are actively asking questions about feeding or form and function. In fact, most leading form and function studies reside in the vertebrate literature. Unaware of any recent publication dealing with specific questions about form and function in insects, we agreed the symposium should be published and the Entomological Society of America should be the appropriate publisher.