DACCORDI, M., AND P. M. GIACHINO [Eds.]. 2003. Results of the Zoological Missions to Australia of the Regional Museum of Natural Sciences of Turin, Italy. I. Monografie XXXV, Museo Regionale de Scienze Naturale Torino. 565 pp. ISBN 88-86041-49-7. Hardback. 40 Euros + postage from Museo Regionale di Scienze Naturali, Via Giolitti 36, 10123 Torino, Italy. Fax (011) 43207301.

It used to be during the 19th century and first six decades of the 20th century that European museums or scientific societies would organize collecting expeditions to remote corners of the world. Then, over years, would appear volumes of descriptions of new species, in most instances preceded by accounts of geography and geology. One well-known example is the long set of volumes called Biologia Centrali-Americana published in England between 1879 and 1907. Some of those volumes, even after more than a century remain the latest comprehensive studies of some insect families in Mexico and Central America. Other notable examples are volumes published on the fauna of the former Belgian Congo by the Institut National des Parcs Nationaux du Congo Belge.

Such expeditions and accounts therefrom have become rarer. Although there was a grandiose expedition (The Wallace Project) to Sulawesi (Indonesia) in 1985, marking the centenary of exploration in Indonesia by Alfred Russel Wallace, results were not published in a single set of volumes. The book before me is the result of Italian expeditions to Australia that extended from 1991 through 2002 with gaps. It was supported by personal funds of some researchers, by Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei of Rome (1996-2002), and by the Museo Regionale de Scienze Naturali of Turin (1998-1999). Of course the expedition established collaborative relationships with Australian institutions and researchers, but the Italian researchers have substantially advanced the progress of knowledge of the Australian invertebrate fauna. This appears to be the first volume of a set. Although most authors are Italian, they wrote all contributions in English, making the information much more available to Australian (and American) researchers. I congratulate them on their effort because English is at best a second language for almost all of them. This would not have happened in the early years of the 20th century when similar works appeared especially in French, German, and Italian.

This book begins with a 9-page preface concentrating on the environments where collections were made, and illustrated by color photographs. It describes places visited and collection methods. It emphasizes Australian studies as a means of understanding the Gondwanian linkages between Australia, southern Africa, and southern South America.

Groups of invertebrates dealt with in this book are oligochaete worms (one chapter), carabids (five chapters), aleocharine staphylinids (one chapter), cholevine leiodids (one chapter), tenebrionids (one chapter), scarabs in almost the broadest sense (one chapter), lucanids (one chapter), chrysomelids (four chapters), some sphecids and some eumenids (one chapter each). So the book is a "must have" for enthusiasts of carabids, chrysomelids, Australian invertebrates, and anyone who is digging for information on Gondwanian zoogeography. Others with systematic interests in the other groups documented most likely will be content with a photocopy of the chapter of special interest for personal study.

My special interests in the book were in a chapter by Pier Mauro Giachino, The genus *Pheropsophus* Solier, 1833 in Australia (Coleoptera: Carabidae), and in one by Roberto Pace, New or little known Aleocharinae from the Australian Region (Coleoptera: Staphylinidae). I was surprised to note that Giachino, who provided beautifully colored drawings of adults and a little information about habitats, does not acknowledge Terry Erwin's (1971) reclassification of Pheropsophina, in which only the Neotropical species are classified in *Pheropsophus*. I was not surprised by Pace's chapter, in which dozens of new species and some new genera are described, and a few are redescribed more completely than before, accompanied by line drawings, as one of a seemingly endless series of papers by this author dealing piecemeal with the world's huge aleocharine fauna. On a lighter note, in one of the chapters on chrysomelids, I was surprised to learn of the existence of a genus named *Faex* by the 19th-20th century taxonomist J. Weise. The Latin word *faex* is the singular of *faeces*—perhaps Weise was having a bad day when he chose that name.

An index to taxa included would have been a worthwhile addition. Perhaps a better marketing strategy would have been to wait until more chapters had been written, and then to organize them along classificatory lines so that there might be one volume on Hymenoptera, one on Diptera, one on Coleoptera, etc. Arguably, this might have promoted sales to taxonomists interested in one invertebrate order but not others. The purchase price is a bargain, especially compared with the price it might have commanded from a commercial publishing house, because it is beautifully produced, although the $U.S. has now (5 November 2004) reached an all-time low of 0.78 Euros.

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