
Preface

Arthropods, no doubt, comprise the largest species group of animals on planet Earth. They are also the earliest animals on Earth. But until now they have received little research effort especially in the tropics and subtropics. As a result, to date, there have been not many up-to-date, comprehensive books on arthropods, despite their worldwide importance. Among arthropods, insects have received the maximum attention because of their presence as pests on crops, vectors of human and livestock diseases and as nuisance creatures. As a consequence biologists from time immemorial have been studying and laying emphasis only on insects of economic importance rather than on arthropods as a whole. This has resulted in undervaluing their roles and ecosystem services in different spheres, a vital void.

This compendium hopes to provide information on arthropods, their diversity, their interaction with other biotic and abiotic elements and their roles in the web of living organisms. Certainly, the book does not claim to present the vast body of information on arthropods in one volume. But it is a sincere attempt to focus on the importance and significance of arthropods in the tropics, aimed to urge their economic and ecological roles, and the vital links they forge with other biotic elements. It is imperative that humans consider arthropods as an important animal community and strive to sustain their activities and services in the ecosystems.

The book *Economic and Ecological Significance of Arthropods in Diversified Ecosystems: Sustaining Regulatory Mechanisms* has 20 chapters. Exhaustive data on arthropods associated with soil, forests and crops like rice, grain legumes, tea, coffee, mango, cotton, cashew and vegetables in the tropics are documented in this volume. The wealth of information provided on their population, roles and activities can be hopefully harnessed for human welfare and health of the ecosystems. There are also chapters on arthropod ecology, evolution, utility as food, medical and pharmaceutical value, diversity and distribution.

We hope this book will go a long way in fulfilling major gaps in our knowledge on arthropods and in improving environmental quality. This compilation is aimed to enthuse and convince the academicians as well as decision makers to utilize arthropods to not only improve yields but also sustain their ecosystem services.

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Sustaining Regulatory Mechanisms

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