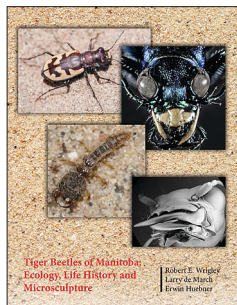


Tiger Beetles of Manitoba: Life History, Ecology and Microsculpture

By Robert E. Wrigley, Larry de March, and Erwin Huebner. 2022. Self-published. 106 pages and 80 images, 20.00 CAD, Paper.

A distinct connection to a particular taxon is sometimes an unspoken and deeply personal justification for a particular scientific pursuit. It is not uncommon for a biologist to identify themselves or others by their taxon of choice. “Oh, they are a nematode person” or “I am the fly guy around here” are familiar turns of phrase for anyone in the biodiversity world. These labels need not be problematic. They are usually self-appointed and are born of a choice of a taxon for esoteric reasons.



We end up with “our taxon” because of undergraduate and grad school research projects, necessity within a work placement, or a series of direct involvements with a group of species that one cannot shake. However he got there, Dr. Robert Wrigley, lead author of *Tiger Beetles of Manitoba: Life History, Ecology and Microsculpture*, ended up as a “tiger beetle guy”.

Wrigley’s employment has been within natural history collections and zoos, but always in the vertebrate section. This book demonstrates that a considerable amount of his interest and passion has been with tiger beetles (Coleoptera: Cicindelidae), regardless of his official titles. He has pulled together a considerable amount of scholarship, field research, collections research, and photographic expertise from his

co-authors to generate a comprehensive guide to the tiger beetles of his home province.

The book is laid out in a very user-friendly way. The opening 40 pages lays out a detailed, but highly readable, background on the Cicindelidae. This includes a history of cicindelology in Manitoba, current knowledge of the ecology of tiger beetle adults and larvae, and physical characteristics of the group. I particularly enjoyed the discussion of the tiger beetle's historical biogeography. I feel that some explanation of how the various species got there and why they are where they are is essential for a book focussed on the beetle family in a defined geographical region.

Following this introduction is a species-by-species account of the 19 species of tiger beetles found in Manitoba. In a typical field guide approach, diagnostic characteristics and excellent photos are included rather than a dichotomous key. This is entirely appropriate given the number and distinct appearance of the species listed. With these pages in hand, a reader could identify any tiger beetle that they are skilled enough to catch or photograph. Furthermore, they could learn more about the ecology of the species and possibly seek out unseen species in unique habitats within the province.

A series of scanning electron micrographs of tiger beetle structures is also included in the book. These photos bring equal parts morphological examination and aesthetic appreciation. Rather than a biophysics treatise, the photographs are presented as an expression of nature's microscope-scaled sculpture. Along with the breathtaking photographs of all 19 species alive and in the field, humorous cartoons and the occasional poem are included. Such is the freedom of self-publishing that these can be included at will.

A deep love of wondrous little predators is at the core of this book. The patience required to track down and study what are often considered the most agonizingly elusive of insects is beyond comprehension. The reward for such patience and dedication is this book. It may turn you into a tiger beetle person yourself.

A copy of *Tiger Beetles of Manitoba* may be purchased for 20.00 CAD by contacting robertwrigley@mymts.net. (Please note there is a 19.00 CAD shipping cost within Canada.) The book is also available for viewing on the Nature North website (http://naturenorth.com/Tiger%20Beetle/Tiger_Beetles.html).

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