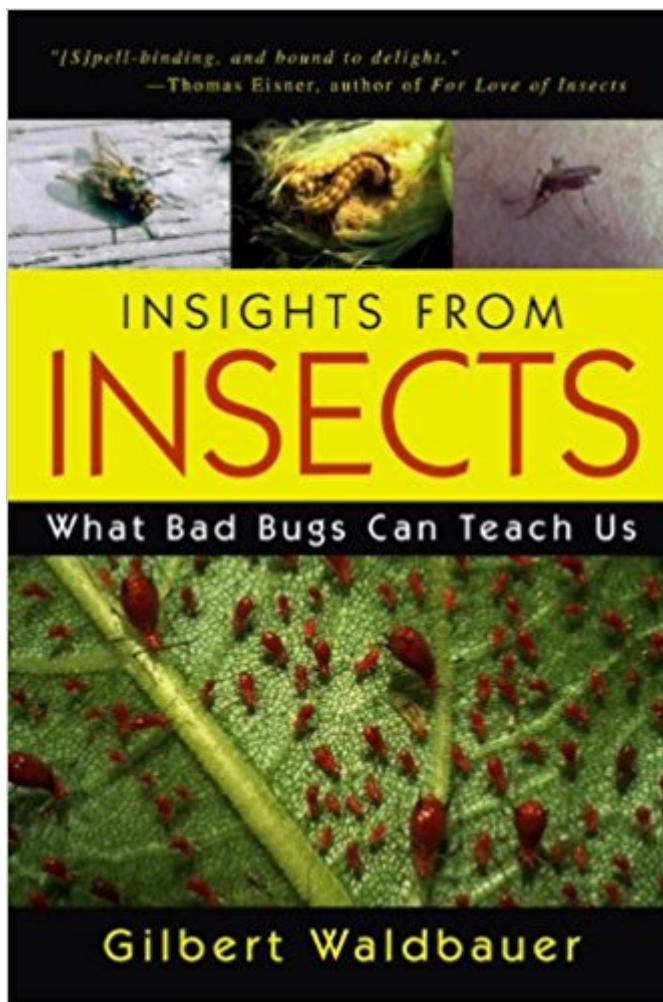


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# Insights From Insects: What Bad Bugs Can Teach Us



## Synopsis

This fascinating, beautifully illustrated book profiles twenty "troublesome bugs," showing how the study of these creatures has led scientists to many basic discoveries that have enhanced our understanding of life. The reader learns how an American entomologist was awarded France's gold medal of honor for rescuing the French wine industry from destruction by the aphid-like "grape phylloxera"; how the World Health Organization almost completely eradicated malaria through the use of DDT before the insect adapted to the insecticide and became resistant; how some insects disguise themselves to avoid detection; how others survive the subzero temperatures of winter; why some flies have a uterus and a mammary gland; and many more strange and tantalizing true tales about these wonderful, troublesome "pests" — pests that have taught us vital lessons about survival, nature, and the environment.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The pop-biology premise that all of nature is a source of edification and delight has its limits tested in this engrossing - and quite gross - collection of essays on insect pests. Entomologist Waldbauer (What Good Are Bugs?) profiles a rogue's gallery of unhealthful, unprofitable and unsavory creatures from the mosquito and house fly to an array of agricultural scourges. From their ingenious strategies for wreaking havoc and evading retribution from predators, toxic plant chemicals, insecticides and eradication programs, he gleans lessons about the Darwinian struggle for survival and the complex, easily upset balance of ecosystems. Waldbauer's lucid, engaging style, informed by accessible discussions of his and other scientists' research, maintains a lab-coated tone of

interested objectivity. Still, there's a fine line between the wonder of life and the horror of life, and it's pretty much erased when Waldbauer writes of New England towns buried by gypsy moth caterpillars, reviews case studies of humans infested with flesh-eating screwworm maggots, or ticks off the list of insect parts the government tolerates in processed foods (tomato sauces can contain "thirty fly eggs, fifteen fly eggs and one maggot, or two maggots"). Readers may therefore find his lessons on how pests are eradicated - by siccing ladybug predators on them, stamping out their fertility with swarms of radiation-sterilized males or simply torching them with flame throwers - grimly satisfying indeed. Photos. (Mar.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Humans and insects often want the same things at the same time. We think of insects as pests, but whether an insect is being a pest or not depends on the place, the season, and the circumstances. As entomologist Waldbauer (*What Good Are Bugs?* 2003) points out, less than 2 percent of the 900,000 known insects are pests, and yet the fight to control these pest species has taught scientists much about insect genetics, behavior, and physiology. In this highly accessible account, the author profiles 20 "bad bugs," all of which reveal basic tenets of biology, including the mosquito, the fruit fly, and the aphid. And black swallowtail butterflies are masters of disguise, resembling bird droppings as caterpillars and mimicking poisonous pipevine swallowtail butterflies as adults. Also, the French wine industry was saved--after the accidental introduction of an American aphidlike grape pest almost wiped out the grape plants--when the French vines were grafted onto American rootstocks, as the American plants had evolved resistance to the pest. These are mere samples from an often-mesmerizing introduction to both insects and biological principles that will be sought out by science-minded readers. Nancy BentCopyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

A greater understanding of insects is what the world needs and Gilbert Waldbauer is one of the best people to do that. We have thoroughly enjoyed reading his previous books and learned so much from them. This new book is yet another eye-opener. Many thanks to the author for a great read.

This book is a pretty fun read. It has all kinds of fun comparisons, and a few interesting pictures. I also like pretty books, and this one has a very vivid cover, and made well. This book covers mosquitoes, house flies, drosophila, corn rootworms, fruit flies, aphids, tsetse fly, evergreen bagworm, black swallowtail butterfly, cabbage white butterfly, corn earworm, gypsy moth, grape

phylloxera, codling moth, european corn borer, japanese beetle, chinch bug, hessian fly, cottony cushion scale, and the screwworm fly.

I had no idea how to download this textbook. I contacted the "help" center and I could tell they had NO idea what they were talking about (they literally talk around in circles). I was patient the whole time. Way to waste my hour! First time using to buy textbooks, never will use it again. I'm actually returning the Kindle textbook. Trust me I'm not a rude customer but this made me a little irritated!

Easy to read and understand. Author keeps your interest throughout the book! Would recommend to any "insect lovers". Loving forward to more!

Gilbert Waldbauer has written several entertaining and informative books on insects, but "Insights from Insects: What Bad Bugs Can Teach Us" may well be his best, both from the importance of the subject and because of the clarity with which he expounds it. Insects have always fascinated me and Waldbauer explains why we all should at least pay attention to these real owners (along with worms, microorganisms and plants) of planet earth. Starting with the most dangerous insects on earth- mosquitoes (malaria kills about a million people a year worldwide and is now re-invading the United States, and it is just one of the diseases that mosquitoes vector) - and going on through the house fly, the "fruit fly" (used in laboratory genetics studies), aphids, the tsetse fly, the bagworm, the black swallowtail (a pest of carrots and relatives), the cabbage white, the corn earworm, the gypsy moth, the grape phylloxera, and several others, ending with the screwworm fly, Waldbauer explains the trials and successes of human attempts to tame "bad bugs." From the failures and environmental disasters of DDT and other chlorinated hydrocarbons to the success of sterile male release for screwworm and the successes and failures of biocontrol, scientists have learned a great deal about the insect world, natural selection, genetics and protecting our crops and our health and the health of our domestic animals. Waldbauer covers each of his subjects in an entertaining and informative way, leaving you with the satisfaction of knowing an amazing amount about each of the insects discussed. If you only have time for one book on economic insects, this would be it. I recommend it without reservation!

From casual readers who enjoy natural history and bugs to students at the high school and college levels, *Insights From Insects: What Bad Bugs Can Teach Us* provides a delightful compendium of insect facts. Twenty chapters on twenty insects move from swallowtail butterflies to moths and

worms as they provide fun facts and natural history.

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