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## Preface

Early in our Ph.D. programs, we met briefly at the XVIIIth International Congress of Entomology in Vancouver. At the time, both of us were studying the reproductive biology of water striders, so we kept in touch over the next few years. Remarkably, by the end of our degrees, we discovered we had independently come to the same conclusions about the mating system of these species—and that conclusion was sexual conflict. Since then, through the work of several laboratories, water striders have become much like *Drosophila*—a model system for the study of sexual conflict. This is a mixed blessing. On the one hand, it feels good to us to have been involved in their rise to prominence. Yet, just like fruit flies, water striders are regarded by some as poor representations of the “real” world. One aim of this book is to convince readers that this may not be true.

The idea of a book on sexual conflict was hatched in 2000, during a sabbatical leave in Umeå. At the time, growth in the field was explosive, and we felt a book was much needed. New discoveries and interpretations were accumulating rapidly as scientists increasingly considered the potential of conflict to shape male-female interactions. We felt a book would help to organize these observations, and set them in the context of established theories of sexual selection and mating system evolution. This book is written in that spirit. We are promoting the hypothesis that sexual conflict is an underappreciated force in the evolution of the sexes and their interactions. As such, many readers will feel that we have not spent enough time debating the alternatives. We acknowledge this. Instead, we point the way to interesting new systems where sexual conflict can be studied, and offer new interpretations of data that had been more or less routinely interpreted in a more classic framework. We believe that it is time to revise our view of male-female interactions, and we think that this exercise will lead to interesting discoveries. We have written this book primarily for graduate students and researchers working in evolution and evolutionary and behavioral ecology. We also anticipate that this book will have some utility for undergraduates and nonspecialists.

At the time we signed on for this book, it felt like a fairly minor endeavor—maybe like writing several papers, but without having to either do the experiments or analyze the data. It wasn't. It seemed to take a long time. And there are certainly interesting obstacles to overcome when authorship is joint. But, now that it is over, producing the book has also been more educational and more fun than we had presumed. Many people have contributed to this book. These include dozens of scientists too numerous to mention, who have provided photos and data, and who have generously shared their expertise with

us. We thank them. Graduate students and other members of our laboratories have also contributed much, including ideas, references, and critical discussions, sometimes without even knowing it. Anna Gosline helped research parts of chapter 3. We are particularly grateful to our friends José Andrés, Russell Bonduriansky, Troy Day, and Ted Morrow for many hours of enlightening discussion about theory, tests, and interpretation. Drafts of various chapters were read by a number of colleagues, who all gave insightful and valuable comments that have helped us avoid most slipups (chapter): Anders Berglund (6), Mark Blows (2), Russell Bonduriansky (2,3), Tracey Chapman (4), Troy Day (2), Magnus Enquist (7), Jaco Greff (6), Dave Hoskens (4), Roger Härdling (7), Mark Kirkpatrick (2), Joris Koene (6), Hanna Kokko (2), Kate Lesells (5), Nico Michiels (6), Rolf Ohlsson (6), Leigh Simmons (4), Tamas Szekely (5), and Jon Ågren (6). Tom Tregenza and an anonymous reviewer read the entire body of the book—we are most grateful for their effort and insight. These chapters are so much better because of them. Joyce Besch did an enormous amount of editorial work on the text and references, and did it at the speed of light! Our editor Sam Elworthy and the staff at Princeton University Press were encouraging, professional, and very patient. We gratefully received financial support during the period the book was written from our main sources of research funds, the Swedish Research Council and the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, as well as funds from the Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research and Higher Education, the Knut and Alice Wallenberg Foundation, Premiers Research Excellence Award, and the *Magnus Bergvalls Stiftelse*. This book would certainly not have been possible without this support.

Our families never veered in their support, despite suffering our periods of distraction, and late-night writing binges, and, at times, having to live with the two of us under a single roof.

Toronto  
April, 11, 2004  
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