



Fabre's Book of Insects

Jean Henri Fabre

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Hailed by Darwin as "The Homer of Insects," famed French entomologist Jean Henri Fabre (1823–1915) devoted hours of rapt attention to insects while they hunted, built nests, and fed their families. Working in Provence, in barren, sun-scorched fields inhabited by countless wasps and bees, he observed their intricate and fascinating world, recounting their activities in simple, beautifully written essays.

This volume, based on translations of Fabre's *Souvenirs Entomologiques*, blends folklore and mythology with factual explanation. Fabre's absorbing account of the scarab beetle's existence, for example, begins with the ancient Egyptians' symbolic view of this busy creature, eventually leading to a careful discussion of its characteristic method of rolling a carefully sculpted ball of food to its den. Elsewhere, he discusses with infectious enthusiasm the physiologic secrets behind the luminosity of fireflies, the musical talents of the locust, the comfortable home of the field cricket, and the cannibalism of the pious-looking praying mantis, among other topics.

These charmingly related stories of insect life are a rare combination of scientific study and literary classic that will delight entomologists, naturalists, and nature lovers alike.

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