

Journal of Melittology

Bee Biology, Ecology, Evolution, & Systematics

The latest buzz in bee biology

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Introducing the *Journal of Melittology*: An outlet for disseminating bee research and raising melittological awareness

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Abstract. A new journal is introduced, the focus of which is to disseminate the results of research on wild and managed bees, to raise public awareness of bees, and to promote and facilitate international communication and collaboration.

INTRODUCTION

Bees are intimately tied to humankind and species such as the Western Honey Bee, *Apis mellifera* Linnaeus, have featured prominently in our culture and mythology for millennia. Today apiculture is a billion dollar industry and, in some countries, meliponiculture and bombiculture are on the economic rise. Global awareness of the importance of native and wild pollinators is increasing rapidly and as we learn more about the sustainable health of agricultural and natural ecosystems more information is sought on those species less closely allied to the managed species of corbiculate bees. Presently the diversity of bees numbers around 20,000 species and these are classified in six or seven extant families (Engel, 2005; Michener, 2007) (Fig. 1). It is this rich diversity complete with its spectacular biologies, morphological specializations, intimate floral associations, and more that is of critical importance for original research, conservation, and public education. While the terms apiculture and apiology are generally thought of when pondering bee science, these specifically refer to the management and study of honey bees (genus *Apis* Linnaeus). Melittology is, therefore, a more suitable term in that it refers to the study of all bees (Apoidea: Anthophila), and it is this

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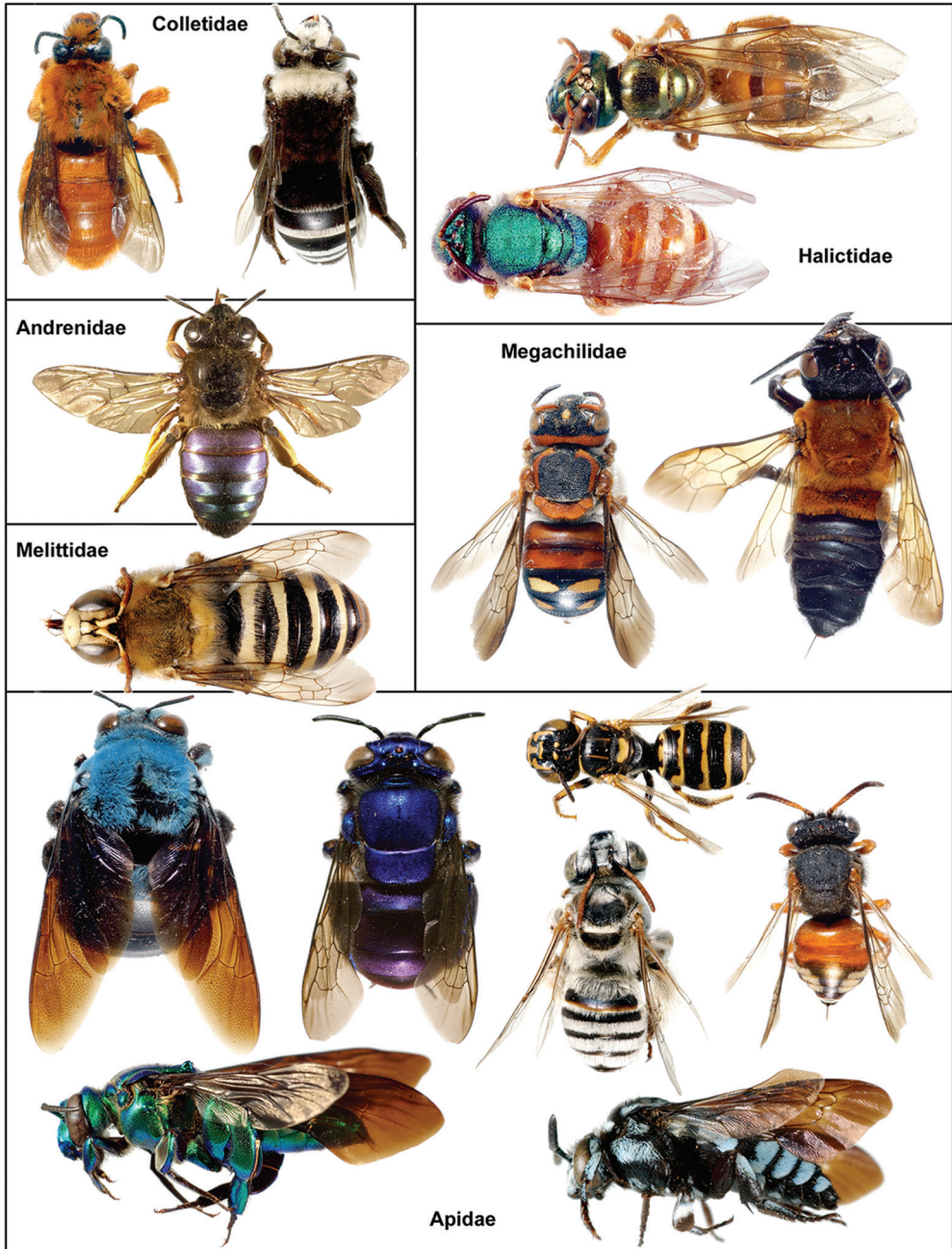


Figure 1. Representative diversity of bees (Anthophila) (from Grimaldi & Engel, 2005).

broader field of inquiry that has grown so dramatically over the decades. No time has been more ripe for a suitable means of bringing focus to melittology and this wealth of unique species.

While there are an abundance of entomological, ecological, evolutionary, and apicultural journals, there is as of yet no true outlet specifically targeting the full diversity

of bees nor one designed to capture the totality of subjects related to these species. It was of interest to us to fill both of these voids. The *Journal of Melittology*, by its very name, is meant to be a serial to encompass all bees, not just those species of honey bees, and simultaneously to be a forum for communicating any aspect of scholarly endeavor related to this diversity – a literal A to Z of everything melittological. Informal newsletters have existed the most familiar perhaps being *Melissa*, an organ which ran for a number of years and helped foster communication among melittologists. It was, however, never meant to be anything more than a very informal means of broadcasting information between melittologists, a purpose it served well before it disappeared in the mid 1990s. What has been lacking is a more formal effort to cover the field of melittology, and it is this gap which we hope this serial will fill.

We are excited to launch the inaugural issue of *Journal of Melittology*, the first, new open-access journal dedicated to bee research in its broadest sense. The journal is peer reviewed and relies on the assistance of diverse international authorities to assure quality and accuracy in its content. Each article appears as a separate issue with a unique number and these are published as papers are ready, thereby assuring quick dissemination of suitable works. Taxonomic issues are registered in ZooBank, with the registration number appearing at the end of the article, and issues are archived at the University of Kansas and in the Biodiversity Heritage Library. These actions satisfy the amendments for electronic publication as outlined by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature (ICZN, 2012). Hardcopy offprints of the journal are available on demand and at cost to the authors at the time of publication. For more information consult the journal's website at <http://journals.ku.edu/melittology>

It is hoped that, in time, the *Journal of Melittology* will become a premier outlet for information pertaining to wild and managed bees, and a resource for seasoned researchers and students, as well as policy-makers and the public-at-large. We shall strive to be a rapid and reliable route for the publication of quality research and reports. The first article, published today in *Journal of Melittology*, showcases a small part of our mission, with further papers already in the works. The inaugural article discusses occurrence data of the orchid bee *Euglossa (Euglossa) amazonica* Dressler outside of the Amazon Basin and its biogeographic implications. We hope that you shall find these results stimulating.

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Journal of Melittology

A Journal of Bee Biology, Ecology, Evolution, & Systematics

The *Journal of Melittology* is an international, open access journal that seeks to rapidly disseminate the results of research conducted on bees (Apoidea: Anthophila) in their broadest sense. Our mission is to promote the understanding and conservation of wild and managed bees and to facilitate communication and collaboration among researchers and the public worldwide. The *Journal* covers all aspects of bee research including but not limited to: anatomy, behavioral ecology, biodiversity, biogeography, chemical ecology, comparative morphology, conservation, cultural aspects, cytogenetics, ecology, ethnobiology, history, identification (keys), invasion ecology, management, melittopalynology, molecular ecology, neurobiology, occurrence data, paleontology, parasitism, phenology, phylogeny, physiology, pollination biology, sociobiology, systematics, and taxonomy.

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