The beetle superfamily Tenebrionoidea, with approximately 30,000 described species in 29 families, is one of the most species-rich and diverse lineages of beetles. Representatives are present in nearly every terrestrial ecosystem due to the amazing array of forms, feeding habits, and life histories exhibited within the group. Two-thirds of the known tenebrionoid species are found within the family Tenebrionidae, commonly known as darkling beetles. Some darkling beetles, such as the red flour beetle, Tribolium castaneum (Herbst), and the yellow meal worm, Tenebrio molitor (Linnaeus), serve as model organisms for the study of evolution. However, the majority of tenebrionoid species are still poorly known or awaiting description.

In order to share current research on darkling beetles and other tenebrionoid families, and help foster new collaborations, the Third International Tenebrionoidea Symposium was organized and held at Arizona State University in Tempe, Arizona USA on August 7th and 8th, 2013. Researchers from ten countries participated with a total of 36 attendees. Presentations ranged from species-level revisions to broad scale Tenebrionidae phylogenies and inventories, darkling beetles intercepted by USDA-APHIS during agricultural quarantine interceptions, and the first steps towards the construction of a Coleoptera Anatomy Ontology.

This special issue of ZooKeys brings together twelve studies produced by the meeting’s attendees, most of which were also presented at the meeting. By organizing these studies into a single volume, we hope to highlight the diversity of studies being undertaken on this fascinating group of beetles and encourage future research.
ZooKeys is a peer-reviewed, open-access, rapidly disseminated journal launched to accelerate research and free information exchange in taxonomy, phylogeny, biogeography and evolution of animals. ZooKeys aims to apply the latest trends and methodologies in publishing and preservation of digital materials to meet the highest possible standards of the cybertaxonomy era.

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Focus and Scope

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ISBN numbers will be assigned to large monographic papers (i.e., major revisions of taxa), monographs, collections of papers, Festschrift volumes, atlases, checklists, conspecti.

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Pensoft Publishers
Prof. Georgi Zlatarski 12, 1700 Sofia, Bulgaria. Tel. +359-2-8704281, Fax +359-2-8704282
E-mail: zookeys@pensoft.net

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