

Preface to the first edition

It was that eccentric British soldier of fortune Col. Meinertzhagen, in his *Birds of Arabia*, who expressed the sentiment that prefaces should be kept short because few people ever read them. Accordingly, I would like to take a brief opportunity to express my gratitude to the people who offered encouragement and assistance during the preparation of this book. I would like to thank Adele Strauss Wolbarst, Robert Cnoops, Charmaine Slack, Sophia Skiordis, Caroline Mondel, Jill Keetley-Smith, Heather Edwards, Gail Arbeter, and the Lending Library at Boston Spa, England, for help while most of this manuscript was being prepared at the University of the Witwatersrand. For general encouragement while at Pahlavi (Shiraz) University and for providing assistance during the last turbulent and chaotic

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When photographs or drawings have been taken directly from the original material, this is indicated by stating in the legend that it is *from* the original work. Most of the drawings have been redrawn to suit my tastes, and these drawings are indicated by stating that the work is *after* the original. In some cases I have made drawings from photographs or have incorporated a number of drawings in one, in which case I state that the finished drawing is *adapted* from the original work or works.

I have used the metric system in this book, and the fine-structural illustrations are expressed in micrometers (μm) and nanometers (nm).