

Blood-sucking insects transmit many of the most debilitating diseases of man including malaria, sleeping sickness, filariasis, leishmaniasis, dengue, typhus and plague. In addition these insects cause major economic losses in agriculture both by direct damage to livestock and because of the veterinary diseases, such as the various trypanosomiases that they transmit. The second edition of *The Biology of Blood Sucking Insects* is a unique, topic-led commentary on the biological themes that are common in the lives of blood-sucking insects. To do this effectively it concentrates on those aspects of the biology of these fascinating insects that have been clearly modified in some way to suit the blood-sucking habit. The book opens with a brief outline of the medical, social and economic impact of blood-sucking insects. Further chapters cover the evolution of the blood-sucking habit, feeding preferences, host location, the ingestion of blood and the various physiological adaptations for dealing with the blood meal. Discussions on host-insect interactions and the transmission of parasites by blood-sucking insects are followed by the final chapter, which is designed as a useful quick-reference section covering the different groups of insects referred to in the text.

The second edition of *The Biology of Blood-Sucking Insects* has been fully updated since the first edition was published in 1991. It is written in a clear, concise fashion and is well illustrated throughout with a variety of specially prepared line illustrations and photographs. The text provides a summary of knowledge about this important group of insects and will be of direct interest to advanced undergraduate and postgraduate students in medical and veterinary parasitology and entomology.

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COVER ILLUSTRATION: Scanning electron micrograph of a ventral view of a pubic louse (*Phthirus pubis*), computer-coloured pink and gold. David Gregory and Debbie Marshall: The Wellcome Trust Medical Photographic Library.

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