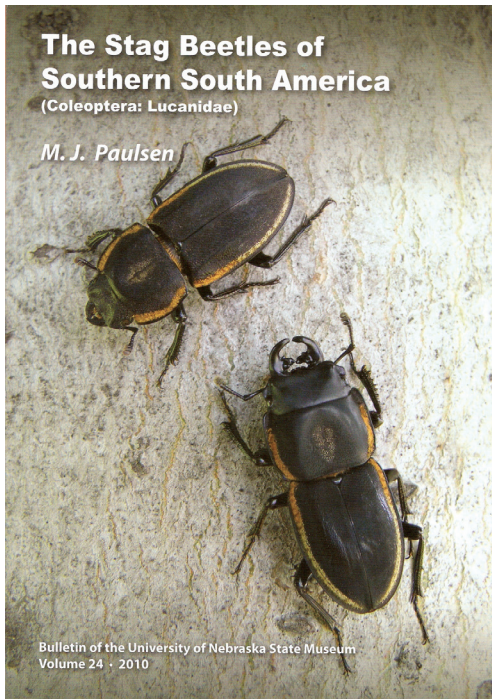


Paulsen, M. J. 2010. **The Stag Beetles of Southern South America (Coleoptera: Lucanidae)**.
Bulletin of the University of Nebraska State Museum, 24: 1-148.



The family Lucanidae has had a chequered taxonomic history. With the showy appearance and large size of many species, there has been a strong interest in the group by collectors and amateur entomologists for over a century. This interest has resulted in a large number of taxonomic papers on this group relative to other Scarabaeoidea and beetles in general. This has been an advantage in getting a good overall idea of the world diversity of this family as much of the basic descriptive work has been done (to some degree). On the other hand, there have been many poor-quality taxonomic publications on lucanids that have detracted from our understanding of the group through the creation of sometimes overwhelming numbers of superfluous names. This problem has been compounded by the lack of good quality taxonomic

revisions and identification guides at higher taxonomic levels.

Ten years ago, the lucanids of southern South America were in horrible disarray taxonomically with no usable keys to species and no quality taxonomic revisions available. Lucanid species from this region were largely unidentified or misidentified in museum collections and the scientific literature. Since then, M. J. Paulsen and his colleagues have steadily worked to rectify this problem in a series of taxonomic papers that culminate in "*The Stag Beetles of Southern South America*". This book contains keys (in English and Spanish) to all of the genera and species of the focal region along with descriptions and full taxonomic treatments for all taxa. Some of the genera covered in this book were revised in previous papers by the author and colleagues, but two of the larger genera, *Erichius* Maes and *Pycnosiphorus* Solier, are newly revised in this book. The taxonomy is enhanced by a molecular phylogenetic analysis of the members of the tribe Lucanini occurring in the focal region. There are also copious amounts of natural history information based on field observations and previous scientific literature.

I have used this book extensively for the identification of museum specimens and have found it to be an invaluable resource. The keys are well constructed and easy to use and I have found that I always have confidence in the species identifications obtained using Paulsen's keys. In addition, the author has examined virtually all of the primary types for lucanid taxa described from the region and has resolved the taxonomic problems that have plagued past authors. Questionable species names have been synonymized and the true identities of chronically misapplied names have been

clarified. The species covered in the book are illustrated with crisp habitus images with supplemental images of specific characters and genitalia as needed, and there are even numerous photographs of live beetles in the field. In addition, there are detailed distributional maps for all species covered.

Simply put, this book is a milestone for lucanid systematics and will be a key resource for many decades to come. This is the kind of book that is so comprehensive that it makes all previous publications

obsolete. I strongly recommend this book to anyone even remotely interested in lucanid beetles. It will be of particular use to anyone who lives or does field work in this part of the world.

Available for \$40 USD + postage from:
<http://www.unl.edu/museum/research/entomology/SSAMLucanidae.html>

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