



# **Meanderings in the Bush: Natural History Explorations in Outback Australia**

*Richard E. MacMillen, Barbara J. MacMillen*

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This book is a true one. It speaks of zoological science in a unique land - the Channel Country of arid Australia - through personal and immediate experience. It is a book imbued with the joy of scientific discovery and of the fun that accompanies the life of the field biologist. It tells of the fascination that Professor MacMillen felt from the time of his first exposure to what he describes as "a land of ecological wonder". In so doing, it happens also to tell the human side of several scientific marvels uncovered by Dick MacMillen, such as the extraordinary water-conserving abilities of Australian hopping-mice and the amazing paradox of the desert crab. The book is true, furthermore, because it revels in the contrariness of the Australian deserts, where flooded roads are as much a hazard as are the dust and bush-flies that one expects. Large periods of my own career have similarly been devoted to the joys and tribulations of outback life and exploration, and so I can vouch for its authenticity. I commend this splendid book to you. Steve Morton, Australian Arid-zone Ecologist, and Group Executive, Sustainable Energy & Environment Unit, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization, Canberra, Australia Richard (Dick) E. MacMillen, Professor Emeritus of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, University of California, Irvine, has higher degrees in Zoology from Pomona College (B.A.), University of Michigan (M.S.), and University of California, Los Angeles (Ph.D.). Barbara (Barb) J. MacMillen, volunteers with The Nature Conservancy of Oregon Southwest Region, earned a B.S. in Geography from Southern Oregon University. Dick's ecological research in central Australia commenced with Fulbright support in 1966, and continued in 1974. Since 1983, Dick and Barb have participated in several additional Australian research adventures, culminating in 2002. They have lived in southern Oregon's Rogue Valley since 1996.

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