

Summary: Jerry Cook, Mordellidae (Tumbling Flower Beetles)

Jerry Cook's leadership included being the first president of the Big Thicket All Taxa Biological Inventory, now called the Thicket of Diversity.

Dr. Cook served as the Associate Vice President for Research and a biology professor at Sam Houston State University. Prior to this appointment, he served as a program director at the National Science Foundation. Jerry conducted research on the ecology and systematics of the insect families Formicidae and Strepsiptera, some of which parasitize ants.

The Cook Lab included three graduate students, two of which worked on ant projects. It is unknown how many other students were impacted through work in the lab over the years. Other activities of Jerry Cook included: Associate Editor of the Southwestern Naturalist and Proceedings of the Entomological Society of Washington, Executive Director of the Institute for the Study of Invasive Species, and Curator of Entomology at the Sam Houston State University Natural History Collection.

Dr. Jerry Cook's name can be found linked to numerous research projects during the early years of the Thicket of Diversity. Today he is recognized as Distinguished Professor, Entomology, Dept of Biological Sciences, Sam Houston State University.

No new data has been submitted for Mordellidae. The 17 species listed in the 2026 Taxa Tally are verified and correct.

Submitted by: ToD Chair Mary C. Johnston and Intern, Natalia Doiron, April 2026