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Invertebrate of the Month

February-March 2012



Poo Protection

There are many insects which munch on eucalypt leaves. Birds and other invertebrate predators therefore find the canopies of eucalypts and other trees a useful snack bar and restaurant. One way of preventing yourself from being part of the menu is to look unappetizing, and one way of doing that is to cover yourself in excrement (poo). The weevil above is part of the sub-family Gonipterinae and is known as *Oxyops* sp. The larvae skeletonize eucalypt leaves in tracks across the leaf (above right). To increase their chance of survival they cover themselves in their poo (above left).