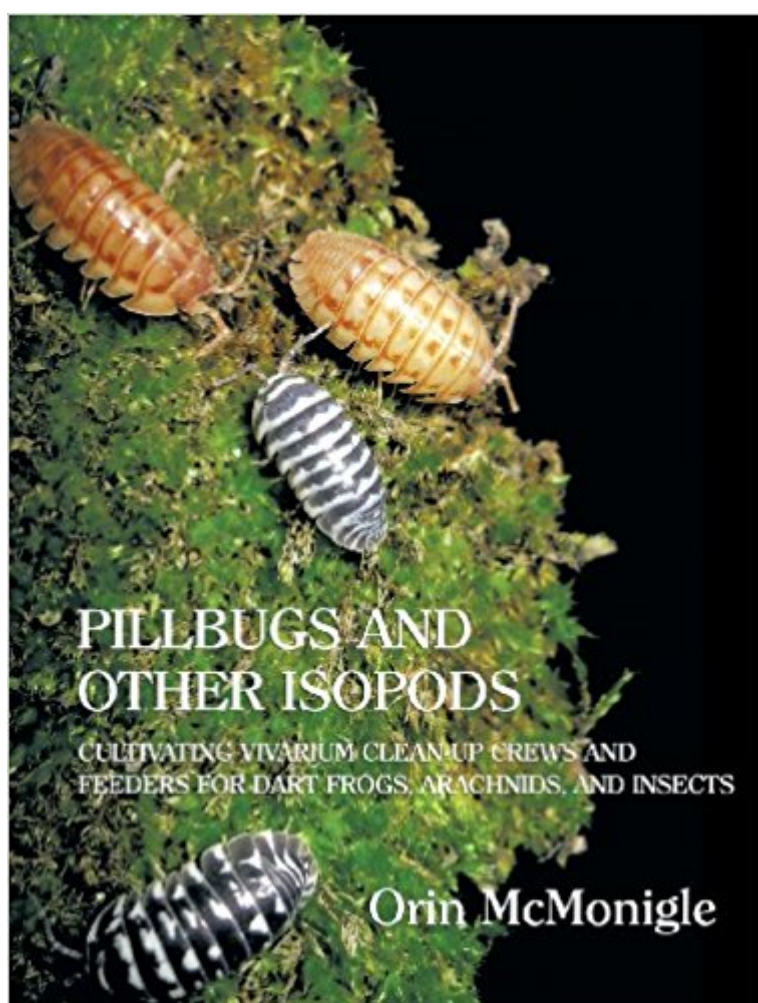


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# Pillbugs And Other Isopods: Cultivating Vivarium Clean-Up Crews And Feeders For Dart Frogs, Arachnids, And Insects



## Synopsis

The pillbug and its relatives are beloved the world over by children-in this text they get their due for adults. Spectacular cultivars and amazing species represent an often forgotten group of backyard arthropods. In recent years the beautiful peach pillbug, zebra armadillo-bug, and Dalmatian isopod, among others, have burst on the scene in a growing hobby. Their use as feeders for herps and invertebrates combined with spectacular clean-up crew attributes for terrariums and paludariums may be the main assets of the isopod, but after learning about these spectacular beauties, their simple husbandry, and historical cultivation, the child inside may fall in love again.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Writing about pillbugs in a format for the serious enthusiast, in a large format, color text may seem almost akin to selling an adult guide to [children's folly](#). It seems far [beyond the scope and cost of production](#) [that might interest](#) [the youngest audience](#) and yet it is the type of text needed for those adults truly interested in the biology and husbandry of the isopod. Another problem was choosing a title that people may [look at](#) [and yet still](#) [appeal to those rare and impressively](#) [brave souls still in love with this fantastic little crustacean](#) and looking for serious, quality information, [that could](#) [impress even the most versed of invertebrate familiars](#).

I [f](#) [c](#) [â](#) [-â](#) [â](#), [m](#) somewhat new to the vivarium hobby, but unlike most people who may be keeping frogs or lizards, I used to house terrestrial snails. This was my very first attempt at a

vivarium, and it was pretty darn primitive compared to the stuff that's out there. The enclosure was just a simple 15 gallon aquarium tank with some dirt in it and a few snake plants. There was no drainage layer and no tank "clean-up" helpers other than some red wigglers. After my beloved snails died of old age, I didn't have any pets for a long time, but I've recently reacquired the itch to keep beautiful mollusks once more. As such, I've decided that this time, I'm going to make a proper bioactive vivarium setup, complete with drainage level, more varied plantings, and extra cleanup helpers. Thus, I've decided that adding in some pillbugs would do me some good. Unfortunately, there isn't really much info out there about pillbugs and other isopods at least, not beyond the basic information of "they make good tank cleaners" and "they are easy to care for." I'm quite hesitant to add a creature to my tank that I don't have prior experience with, so it was very pleasing to come across this book so I could do more research on them. The author really outdone himself on this one, as this is the ONLY serious guide to isopods that I've yet to come across. Not just that, but the book answered all my questions, such as which species of isopod can roll up into a ball and which cannot, whether or not I should be worried about massive overpopulation (as with snails), which species breed more quickly than others, and how to care for the different species of pillbug and sowbug. Not just that, but this book includes detailed information on individual cultivars that are commonly available for sale, such as the Giant Orange Sowbug and the Zebra Pillbug. This will definitely help me narrow down which species to choose for my tank. While this book is a fantastic resource and I have to give it praise for that, there are a few little critiques I have for it. First off, it's only about a hundred pages long, and the current price (at the time of this review) of \$35 is a bit steep. Still, I understand that this is a niche topic, and publishing costs can be high for those who are independent or have a limited audience, so I can forgive that pretty easily. Secondly, I felt that the cover and binding were pretty high quality, and the color photos look good, but the pages are sadly regular-paper pages instead of being nice, thick, glossy pages. Once again, though, that may not have been in the publishing budget. It's too bad, because those lovely photos would just pop on some glossy paper. | Speaking of photos, some of the pics have little to do with the text, such as the random pics on pg. 16-17. Also, on page 25, he's describing the physical identifying differences between two species of terrestrial isopod, but the pics on the adjacent page features neither of them which is a baffling choice.

So, I guess I could say that I wish the photos in some spots were slightly more relevant. Nonetheless, despite a few minor flaws, I still heartily recommend this book if you have any interest in vivarium-crafting or isopods. It's a great and valuable resource, and honestly, the only serious book on isopods that I've yet come across. I've noticed that the author has written several other books on various other critters (such as millipedes, whipscorpions, spiders, etc.). I do wish he had an interest in land snails so I could buy that book, too, but oh well, can't get everything in life!

Good book :) I recommend

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