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Insects or Insecta (from Latin insectum) are hexapod invertebrates and the largest group within the arthropod phylum. Definitions and circumscriptions vary; usually, insects comprise a class within the Arthropoda. Maria Sibylla Merian's father, the Swiss engraver and publisher Matthäus Merian the Elder, married her mother, his second wife, Johanna Sybilla Heyne, in 1646.