

# PSAMMONALIA

The Newsletter of the  
International Association of Meiobenthologists

Number 135, January 2003.



HAPPY  
NEW  
YEAR

A detailed illustration of a meiobenthic organism, likely a rotifer, is integrated into the letter 'S' of the word 'NEW'. The organism is shown in a curled, S-like shape, with its body segments and internal structures clearly visible. The entire graphic is set against a light blue background.

Composed and Printed at:  
The Natural History Museum,  
Cromwell Road, London,  
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## International Association of Meiobenthologists

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## EDITORIAL

New Year's greetings to all meiofaunologists everywhere!

Here in Northern Europe we have made it past the Winter solstice with only walking wounded from the massed ranks of viruses that swooped down on us. The days are starting to lengthen and the snow has melted.

At the end of this year we intend to move the newsletter into an electronic format for distribution via e-mail. To this end we will need updated e-mail addresses from all our subscribers. We intend to put our mailing list on the web in the next three months and want everybody to look it up and check that their address is current, please!

**NB: IF YOU DO NOT GIVE US AN UP-TO DATE E-MAIL ADDRESS YOUR COPY CANNOT ARRIVE**

The other news is that we will be investigating the mechanisms for instituting a series of award honours for contributions to meiofaunology.

To start the ball rolling, I propose as straw men two types of awards; ones that recognise achievements for the last three years and ones that are lifetime achievement honours.

I suggest that we honour the best student paper and poster given at our International Meeting every three years and the best paper on meiofaunology published during the previous three years.

I further suggest two types of lifetime achievement award. The first would be to acknowledge a major body of work over several years that has significantly advanced meiofaunology. The second would be honorary membership of the society to a person who is not primarily a meiofaunologist but has through their work made a major contribution in the promotion of our science. This person could be a scientist but also some sort of layman such as a television presenter.

I will be conferring with Society officials and ex-chairs for their opinions over the next few months.

## To Err Is Human – But To Screw Up On A Big Scale Requires a Computer

We are having problems with the Society's website on [www.meiofauna.org](http://www.meiofauna.org) that is apparently unobtainable outside of the USA. Certainly it refuses absolutely to talk to Englishmen or mad dogs. Our genial and highly efficient webmaster, Professor Keith Walters, has been banging his head against the problem for some time and is currently threatening to disembowel a Microsoft engineer with a blunt copepod.

Keith has set up a mirror site on <http://ww2.coastal.edu/meiofauna> so if you are having problems, then please use this until we get this sorted out.



Well, I think that's enough for now people – keep taking samples and don't drink the Ludox.

**John Lamshead**

## NEWS FROM MEMBERS

### Olav Giere

Dear Colleagues, invited by Dr. Y. Shirayama, our former IAM-chairman, I had the opportunity to give a 12-days course on marine meiofauna to Japanese students at the Seto Marine Biological Laboratory of the University of Kyoto, Japan. Although in September, it was still rather hot, even at the coast side.

The beautiful laboratory with an impressive public aquarium is located on a promontory surrounded by wonderful beaches and diverse sediment sites.

Here the students could sample meiofauna, learn to extract the animals and work on little projects of various kinds. These activities were always supported by dedicated assistants. For most of the students this was the first encounter with the meio-world, so they had to be thoroughly introduced in morning lectures. I think they enjoyed this experience of dealing -in a foreign language- with a foreign teacher teaching them a new field of science.

Dr. Shirayama, the host and director of the lab, shared the organisation and practical work with me, and was the translator whenever things remained unclear. Moreover, he helped me in all respect to orientate myself, being for the first time in Japan, in a rather foreign world, rich in tradition and culture. We had a wonderful time together.



I returned to Europe with many rich impressions of another, an genuinely own world - despite its worldwide technical achievements. It is my dear wish to have the chance returning to Japan, as a "cultural tourist".

### MSc. Cecilia López – Cánovas

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Newsletter Psammonalia is for me like a window to the rest of the world. I don't write about a day in the life of a nematode hunter like Martin G. J. Hendricks because every day in Cuba is unique in the world.

I can say you that, I am a member of IAM since 1988, thanks to the kindness of Dr. W. Duane Hope. I studied at the Biology Faculty, Moscow Lomonosov State University many years ago, my Master dissertation was in Ecotoxicology; but when I arrived to my country I began meiofaunal researches, it was necessary in that moment.

The captivating world of nematodes attracts me, but nobody had been working free-living marine nematodes in Cuba, and was very difficult for me the knowledge of nematodes taxonomy, nevertheless I only know that I will do my PhD in Nematode Ecology and Taxonomy. I am very grateful to Dr. W.D. Hope, Dr. S. Gerlach (who visited my country in 1988 and brought me many, many reprints), Dr. Carlo Heip, Dr. Guy Boucher, Dr. Nicole Gourbault, Dr. R. Warwick, Dr. C. Pastor de Ward, Delta Castillo Fernández my colleague from Mexico and many others nematologists, they sent me the necessary literature.

I am working in a project supported by GEF/UNDP for assessment the biodiversity in the NE archipelago (Sabana-Camagüey), in this moment and I am making the first marine nematode collection in my country. My supervisor is Dr. Catalina Pastor de Ward from Argentina; she was in Havana last June. At the same time I am working like Environmental Consultant in CESIGMA S.A.

## NEW MEMBERS

### Maickel Armenteros Almanza

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My name is Maickel Armenteros Almanza and I am 27 years old. I am single, without children, and I live in Havana City, Cuba. I like my work and my life. My major entertainments are reading and good movies. I practice sports habitually (diving, jogging and swimming) and I enjoy very much meeting with my friends. I am a Bachelor in Biology since June 2000 with Gold Award. I have been working at University of Havana's Marine Research Center since September 2000. Here, I defended successfully my master thesis in June 2002.



My research field is the ecology of meiobenthos. I am focused in the structure of communities, its patterns and why they occur. Also, I evaluate the quality of habitats based on meiobenthic structure. Currently, I am working as leader in the project: *Degradation status of critic habitats for spiny lobster Panulirus argus (Latreille, 1803) in Batabanó Gulf, Cuba: Use of meiobenthic communities as bioindicators*. I have a heavy teaching load. I teach Oceanography in two Master Science Programs in Havana and Cienfuegos universities. I also teach Marine Ecology at the Faculty of Biology in University of Havana. I am advisor to one student on his bachelor thesis.

I participate, in other two disciplines, as advisor of student teams. I hope I can contribute to knowledge in our science field and to facilitate exchange and cooperation between meiobenthologist colleagues. In addition, as a teacher, I am opting for a higher professor category. At middle term (three years), as a part of a work team, I will state the degradation status of the habitats of spiny lobster and recommendations for the implementation of integrated management plan

for this resource. This is a major fishery resource in Cuba and it has been depleted for 12 years. The country has as a priority to know the degradation status of the species' habitats and to implement its sustainable use. I am working to get my PhD degree in this term. In long term, my challengers are to obtain Titular Professor Category, to have the scientific direction of projects in order to solve important problems (for instance: effects of pollution on marine organisms and depletion of fishery resources) for the country and region. And to develop, in my center, a strong work line in the ecology of soft bottoms (including integral analysis of ecosystems).

### Natalie Barnes

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With a background in marine biology, I have trained in marine nematode taxonomy with Dr Tim Ferrero at The Natural History Museum, London. I am currently writing my PhD, *Meiofauna in UK saline lagoons*. The project focuses on species level nematode data with additional meiofauna recorded at taxa level. I have now also began work at the Natural History Museum as an assistant nematode taxonomist. We are studying the meiofaunal populations found on the coast of Kuwait. This is a five year project with seasonal sampling.

### Adam Cook.

I recently completed an 18-month post-doc at the Natural History Museum in London designing and developing new molecular techniques to bulk identify marine nematodes quickly and cheaply. This project was conceived by Dr John Lambshead from the museum and Dr Alex Rogers at the British Antarctic Survey in Cambridge. The results were a success and I am currently finishing the paper discussing the results and outlining the techniques. Expect to see it in the next few months. Before this I completed a PhD at the Natural History Museum whilst registered at The University of Southampton with Dr Lawrence Hawkins as my university supervisor. The title of my PhD was "The Biodiversity of deep-sea nematodes with particular reference to the oxygen minimum zone in the Arabian Sea". Some of the data from my thesis is already in press with further papers either in preparation, or waiting for a free moment so that I can start them!

I have now taken a slight change in career. I have moved away from research and am now a Scientific Affairs Officer for the International Seabed Authority in Kingston, Jamaica. This essentially means, amongst other things, that I am the first contact for research scientists within the International Seabed Authority. The International Seabed Authority is an autonomous international organization established under the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and is the organization through which the members organize and control mining activities in international waters. Please contact me at [ACook@isa.org.jm](mailto:ACook@isa.org.jm) if you would like more information or you feel that there is something we could do for you or you for us. I can't promise anything, but there is definitely potential for useful collaborations

#### **Claus Clausen**

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### **E-mail Distribution of Psammonalia**

As you can see from this issue's editorial, there are plans to change the main means of distribution for Psammonalia to e-mail rather than as paper copies. In the next issue, we hope to distribute an IAM membership list so that

you can all check that your e-mail addresses are correct. In the mean time, I notice that of the last seven people to join IAM, five opted for a paper copy, one for an e-mail copy and one showed no preference, so if you have any opinions on the subject, please let us know (See "Contacting Psammonalia" later in this issue).

**Tim Ferrero.**

### **Glyceel**

Sometimes it seems that the world has gone crazy. I remember thinking that, when I discovered that no company manufactured Glyceel anymore. Then I remembered that it was probably only people like me that still like to make glycerine slides of meiofaunal organisms (nematodes in my case) and to look at them using a light microscope. The evidence thus suggested that it was me and not the world that was at fault. But, membership of the IAM allows me to meet people with similar interests and the question "what do you use instead of glyceel?" is one that crops up regularly.

At this point, a number of alternatives are usually mentioned and discussed – including the inevitable nail varnish – but, personally, I usually emerge from these discussions thinking that Glyceel is still the best.

One possibility remains: to make my own supply. In 1997, J.W. Bates published a paper in the *Journal of Nematology*, which gave a recipe for Glyceel and described the preparation technique. At the time of publication, the slides prepared by the author were six months old and thus, the longevity of the sealant was unproven.

Unfortunately, I am an extremely incompetent chemist and as the recipe for Glyceel calls for the use of nitrocellulose (explosive if handled incorrectly), I have never had the courage to attempt the method myself. However, two pieces of information may help me to change my mind. Firstly, has any IAM member successfully made their own Glyceel? And secondly, does anyone know J.W. Bates? As I would like to know the condition today of the slides that were made in 1997. If anyone could help, I'd be very grateful – contact psammonalia!

Tim Ferrero

Reference:

Bates, J.W. (1997) The Slide-Sealing Compound "Glyceel". *Journal of Nematology* **29**(4):565-566.

## Contacting Psammonalia:

Please send any news, articles or pictures to:

**psammon@nhm.ac.uk**

Or you can write to us at the Natural History Museum – the address is on the front page.

### Editorial Board

John Lamshead (President)

Tim Ferrero (Executive Editor)

Nicola Mitchell (Production Editor).

*This Newsletter is not part of the scientific literature for taxonomic purposes.*

## RECENT LITERATURE

Accornero A, Picon P, de Bovée F, Charrière B, Buscail R 2003. Organic carbon budget at the sediment–water interface on the Gulf of Lions continental margin. *Continental Shelf Research*, **23**: 79-92.

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Yushin et al. , 2002. Ultrastructural study of the tadpole stage of the primitive marine nematode *Enoplus demani* (Enoplida : Enoplida). *Russian Journal of Nematology*, **10** (1), 43-53.

Yushin et al., 2002. Ultrastructure of spermatogenesis in the free-living marine nematode *Pontonema vulgare* (Enoplida, Oncholaimidae).

# International Association of Meiobenthologists

## Application for Membership or Renewal

The International Association of Meiobenthologists is a non-profit scientific society representing meiobenthologists in all aquatic disciplines. The Association is dedicated to the dissemination of information by publishing a quarterly newsletter and sponsoring a triennial International Conference. The newsletter, *Psammonalia*, is published mid-month in February, May, August and November. Membership is open to any person who is actively interested in the study of meiofauna. Annual membership dues are 10 euro (\$ 10 US) and you may pay up to 3 years in advance, i.e. 30 euro (\$30). New members will receive *Psammonalia* beginning with the February issue of the current year. If you are able, please add extra money to be contributed to the Bertil Swedmark Fund, which is used to help students or others who wish to attend the triennial International Conference.

Please check appropriate boxes:

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For all other members: dues can be paid in euro.. Make (euro) checks payable to Ann Vanreusel. If possible make use of the credit card transaction possibilities. Send dues and applications to: Dr. Ann Vanreusel, Marine Biology Section, Ledeganckstraat 35, B-9000 Gent, BELGIUM

(\*) New members please introduce yourself to the IAM in 10 lines for publication in *Psammonalia*.