

During this past summer the editors of Psammonalia have been made aware of a groundswell of interest at home and abroad, but especially in the United States, in research in the biology of interstitial biota and in preliminary analyses of some of the apparently more important parameters of the lacunar environment.

For example, under the auspices of the Systematics-Ecology Program of the Marine Biological Laboratory at Woods Hole, two separate informal meetings of investigators interested in the ecology, systematics and micrology of interstitial biota were held, one in July and the other in August. These sessions were considered quite profitable and were attended by more than a dozen persons with nearly as many interests. An international touch was given by the presence of R. Brinkhurst of Canada, D. Crisp of England and G. Uhlig of Germany.

Further, during his travels this past year in Europe and in South America, co-editor of Psammonalia, R. Higgins, has found a growing enthusiasm and interest in our efforts to establish a better line of communication among psammonologists. Our colleagues in the several countries he visited indicated considerable interest in the possibility of opening our channels to psammonologists world-wide. There is certainly much merit in this suggestion; however, if it is to be accomplished, a more formal organization of the Psammonologist Society will be necessary both to help carry the financial and editorial burdens of the Bulletin and to establish a home for the building file of correspondence.

Great as are the relatively carefree advantages of an organization informally run as this during the past 18 months, cogent reasons have arisen for strengthening and formalizing its structure. It seems to us that the time for organization is now. The number of biologists and geologists making known their interest in investigating various aspects of the interstitial environment has become too great for the co-editors of Psammonalia to assume all the responsibilities. The time has come that some sort of elective officers, board of councilors or similar group be elected by the present registrants if R. Higgins, D. Zinn or anyone else is to act as spokesman for the group.

For this reason it is proposed that at the special session on the biology of interstitial fauna at the AAAS Meetings, to be held in Chambord 14 and 15 of the Americana Hotel on Saturday, December 30 (announcement of program below), formal organization take place. It is proposed further that the revised list of registrants will constitute the electoral body. It is suggested that a minimum of the following items be included on the agenda:

1. Name of the organization.
2. Election of President, President-Elect, and Secretary-Treasurer.
3. Appointment of Constitution and by-laws Committee.
4. Separate organization or section of another society?
5. Appointment of election of Editor and Editorial Board.
6. Establishment of Membership dues.
7. Decision on whether to solicit international membership in the organization.

IT IS STRONGLY URGED THAT PSAMMONALIA REGISTRANTS ATTENDING THIS MEETING BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS AGENDA ITEMS OF SPECIAL INTEREST. Registrants who cannot attend this meeting should forward their suggestions beforehand to either R. Higgins or D. Zinn.

During the past three months several very interesting suggestions have been received from Psammonalia registrants for future inclusion in the Bulletin. These suggestions concern the type of activity that the Bulletin, or a formal organization of the registrants, could accomplish for the general benefit of all psammonological research. Several of these are quoted below.

"I wonder if it would not be helpful to assign a number and letter system to the major animal groups studied by the members and to have this code appear in the alphabetical list of participants?" --Bruce Hopper.

"A recent letter from a student member seeking employment prompts me to ask if our organization can be of assistance in such matters ... by keeping abreast and promoting job opportunities for the membership and their graduate students in psammonology?" --Bruce Hopper.

"If we organize formally it is better to become a section of another society--as ASLO, because it already embraces fresh and salt water research--rather than form a separate organization. The broad base element is important." --Woods Hole Discussion Group.

"Can we select one or more areas and establish depositories for publications pertinent to the interests of the members; could we consider instituting an abstracting service?" --Bruce Hopper.

"It is a good idea to become a section of another society such as ASLO, however, ASLO meets separately and this poses certain problems that would require our affiliation with some special arrangements regarding meetings. The ESA has an aquatic biology section, but this is already a "special group", and a second subdivision would be ridiculous. We could meet separately even though affiliated with ASLO or any other appropriate organization." --Robert Higgins.

"Set up a psammonologist's workshop such as has been done with other areas in IBP planning." --Woods Hole Discussion Group.

"The membership could be assessed a nominal fee to defray the costs of mimeographing abstracts. In fact, we should all stand ready to chip in to help insure the continuance of our Bulletin." --Bruce Hopper.

"Grant proposals for interstitial biology should be encouraged to include team work since the physical and chemical factors of this environment are much too complicated to be handled by the systematist or ecologist who has all he can do to manage the faunistics." --Woods Hole Discussion Group.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dr. John Gray of the Wellcome Marine Laboratory in Yorkshire, England has very kindly volunteered to furnish Psammonalia with the places, dates and times of European Meetings of special interest to readers of the Bulletin. He indicated in addition that he would send the addresses of marine stations in Europe where interstitiologists can work and where there is a resident psammonologist. In essence, Dr. Gray has suggested that he act as a European "coordinator" or collaborator for Psammonalia. We are all tremendously grateful to Dr. Gray for his offer of assistance; this kind of information would help all of us in innumerable ways and at the same time would enhance the reference value of the Bulletin.

Dr. Jeanne Renaud-Mornant similarly has offered her assistance in establishing a better exchange of information, and we are likewise grateful for her help.

There are now at least two institution libraries with complete runs of Psammonalia on file: The Library of the Marine Biological Laboratory in Woods Hole, Massachusetts, and the Library of the Narragansett Marine Laboratory of the University of Rhode Island. The editors of Psammonalia would appreciate receiving additional information of library holdings of this publication.

Directions for shipping live Enchytraeidae, by Dr. Michael J. Tynen:

"Use squat little vials no more than 3/4" high and about the same in diameter with snap-on polythene (polyethylene?) lids which were pierced with lots of small holes for this purpose (I am thinking of worms less than 1" in length). Fill the jar with the substratum from which the worms were taken, taking care to clean it of organic matter. Make sure that the sand is moist, but avoid having free water in the jar. The other thing is to insulate the jars against temperature changes and mechanical damage. I achieve this by wrapping the vials in cotton wool and placing them inside a coffee tin. A non-metal container would provide better insulation, but cardboard boxes allow warm air to enter. Then leave the whole setup, labelled and ready to go, in a cold room or refrigerator (2-5°C) until the last minute before mailing, which should be by the fastest possible route."

AAAS Program-- New York

Saturday, December 30, 1967

Chambord 14 and 15, Hotel Americana

SPECIAL SESSION ON THE BIOLOGY OF INTERSTITIAL FAUNA

9:00 AM Chairman: Robert P. Higgins (Department of Biology, Wake Forest University).

1. Donald J. Zinn (Department of Zoology, University of Rhode Island).
Introduction to two films:
"Biological Adaptations of Marine Sand Microfauna", by Tessier, P., B. Swedmark and J. Dragesco (16 mm, B&W, Sound, 25 min.)
"Halammohydra." by P. Tessier (16 mm, B&W, Sound--in French. 18 min.)
2. Panel Discussion of Topics in Interstitial Research.
3. Business Meeting, Psammonologist's Society.

Other meetings of interest to Psammonologists

North Wales

On 20 August 1967, the aquatic Microbiology Group of the Marine Sciences Laboratories of the University College of North Wales met at Stevenage, near London, to discuss the interstitial fauna-bacteria interaction. Dr. G. D. Floodgate who arranged the meeting has very kindly indicated that he would try and persuade someone to write a brief account of the meeting for a future issue of Psammonalia.

Woods Hole

On 11 July and again on 21 August of this year informal luncheon meetings open to all investigators of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, the laboratories of Bureau of Commercial Fisheries and the Marine Biological Laboratory interested in any aspect of the biology of interstitial fauna and flora were sponsored by the Systematics-Ecology Program of the M. B. L. and chaired by D. Z. Zinn. About a dozen persons with nearly as many interests appeared for each meeting. Dr. Donald Crisp from Wales, Dr. Ralph Brinkhurst from Toronto and

Dr. Gotram Uhlig from Kiel lent an international flavor. Also present were R. Hessler, W. Hummon, J. Hall, L. Pollack, P. Orris, B. Found, E. Palmer, D. Grant, J. Simon, J. Sears, J. Meade, C. Crisp, M. Carriker, T. Poulson. Discussion ranged from methods of collecting through technics of preservation and staining to difficulties in systematics, the functions of Psammonalia and the desirability of formalizing a Psammonologist Society.

Yorkshire, England

Dr. John Gray of the Wellcome Marine Laboratory of Robin Hood's Bay, Yorkshire, England, in a personal communication has indicated that the 3rd European Marine Biological Symposium will be held at Arcachon in 1968, and that the 4th European Marine Biological Symposium is scheduled for the United Kingdom.

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