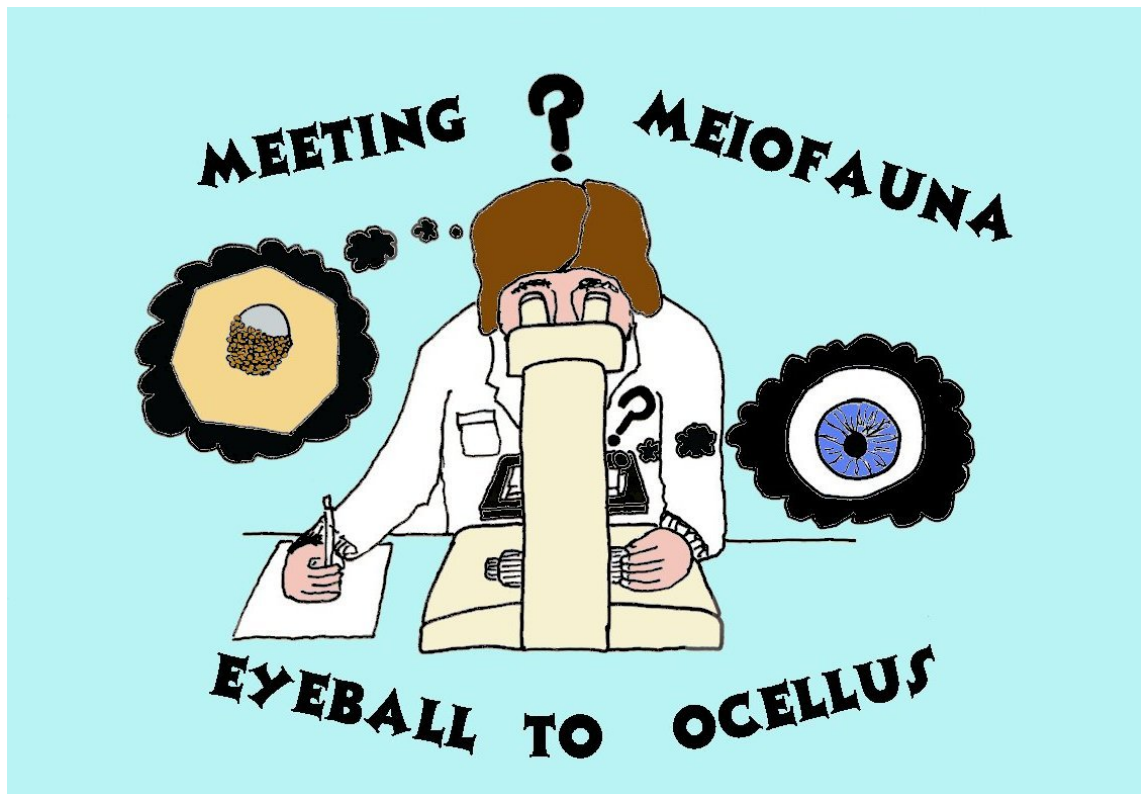


PSAMMONALIA

The Newsletter of the
International Association of Meibenthologists

Number 134, August 2002.



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International Association of Meiobenthologists

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EDITORIAL

The Future of the Society

Since the highly successful meeting at Boston, I have been mulling over how the Association should or could change to meet the needs of the new millennium. The three vehicles we have for communication are the conference, this newsletter and the website.

The conference works splendidly on both 'scientific' and networking levels, as we have been fortunate in a series of excellent organisers. Psammonalia was started in 1966 by Bob Higgins, primarily as a bibliography list, and has grown into the primary communication device of the Association. The question now is whether the newsletter is still valuable. It does seem a little archaic that we should print it out, stick it in envelopes and post it round the world. We could simply e-mail it in a convenient format, such as PDF or even just post it as a downloadable file on the website.

However if we adopt the latter approach, then it raises the issue as to whether we need the newsletter at all as we could simply put the useful recent news, such as new papers or conference information into appropriate pages on the website.

The website has been developed and is run by the hard efforts of Webmaster Keith Walters and the truth is that people like me have not given him the support he needs and deserves. My personal feeling is that the functions of Psammonalia could now be achieved far better on the website but it's the membership's opinion that matters. If we moved the newsletter's functions to the site the next issue is how what information we release free on the site and how much we restrict to the membership. At the moment Keith releases the newsletter freely after a period of time (about a year, I believe). We want to use the website to advertise the importance of meiofaunology and the benefits that accrue to membership while restricting those benefits to those that have bothered to pay their dues!

If we intend to make more use of the website then we are going to have to give Keith more support than we have in the past. I think it is time to start a dialogue on this. Send your comments to: psammon@nhm.ac.uk

Awards and Prizes

It has always struck me that the Association never hands out awards or prizes for achievement in the field of meiobenthology, unlike other scientific societies. If we do not show that we value meiofauna studies then

maybe we cannot expect other to be impressed. The perfect vehicle for this is the International Meiofauna Conference.

I would like to suggest for consideration by the membership that we consider offering the following type of awards.

- (i) Lifetime achievement awards for scientists 'of a certain age' that have made an exceptional contribution to the discipline, awarded by the Executive Committee.
- (ii) An award for the best paper or popular article published on meiofaunology since the previous conference, awarded by the Executive Committee.
- (iii) Awards for best student poster and paper given at the Conference awarded by a board set up for each conference.

As before I would like to canvas the membership's opinion. Send your comments to: psammon@nhm.ac.uk

John Lamshead



ANNOUNCEMENT

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

Today the marine biology lab starts to move to new location. In order to keep contact, you can find my new co-ordinates below. My email address will remain the same.

Dr Marleen De Troch
Ghent University
Marine Biology Section

New address from July 16th 2002

Sterre complex – Building S8 – Groundfloor
Krijgslaan 281
B-9000 Gent
BELGIUM
Tel: 00 32 (0)9 264 85 20
Fax: 00 32 (0)9 264 85 98

The postal address above also applies to:

Ann Vanreusal, Magda Vincx, Maaïke Steyaert, Tom Moens, Sandra Vanhove, Wendy Bonne, Ilse De Mesel, Marleen De Troch, Jan Vanaverbeke, Lee Hee Yoong, Maarten Raes & Tom Gheschiere

4th International Congress on Nematology – Arona, Tenerife

The Fourth International Congress of Nematology was held from the 8th to the 13th June 2002 in Arona Tenerife. It was attended by 464 nematologists from 64 countries. Topics were varied and informative with between four and seven invited speakers to each session. Some of the sessions were not overly relevant for the meiobenthologists at the meeting, as there was a great deal of agricultural issues being discussed, but with parallel sessions there was always something to be gained from at least one of the three topics under discussion. The only problems arose when it was obvious that there was something to be gained from more than one parallel session. This is always a potential problem but when there are so many topics to cover there is no alternative (except for a three-week conference!). The most useful session for meiobenthologists (well, those of us who work on nematodes!) was the one entitled “Marine and freshwater nematodes”. Aldo Zullini, representing freshwater nematode ecologists, and John Lambhead, representing the marine interests, jointly chaired this session. Topics covered ranged from taxonomy, through the results of ecological studies to the new molecular

techniques that are being developed to study nematode ecology and biodiversity. Perhaps the most useful result of this session was finding out the breadth of research being carried out in the aquatic ecosystem and the relative states of ‘play’ between the different disciplines. Other non-agricultural topics being discussed included ‘molecular diagnostics’, ‘digital nematology’, ‘phylogeny, evolution and classification’, ‘biodiversity and indicators’, ‘morphology and development’ and ‘food webs’.

The only disappointment of the conference was the limited number of aquatic nematologists present, particularly those working in the marine environment. Hopefully, the aquatic contingent at the next conference will be greatly increased so as to enhance collaboration across disciplines. Terrestrial nematologists have a much greater understanding of species interactions and we could learn much from their achievements and mistakes. Enquiries at the conference showed that there was a great deal of interest in comparing techniques used in nematological studies in the terrestrial and aquatic environments. I am intending to investigate this matter further, with the possibility of a small meeting in London. If you feel that you may have something to offer if this meeting goes ahead, please do not hesitate to contact me by email: adac@nhm.ac.uk

Adam Cook
The Nematode Research Group
The Natural History Museum

8th International Conference On Copepoda - Keelung, Taiwan

Every three years the World Association of Copepodologists (WAC) holds an international conference. In mid July the 8th International Conference On Copepoda (8th ICOC) was hosted in Taiwan at the National Taiwan Ocean University (NTOU) Keelung, organised jointly by NTOU and the National Museum of Marine Biology & Aquarium (NMMBA). The Taiwanese had done a splendid job organising the meeting and anticipating every need of the participants. They even had a four meter-long, helium-filled copepod tethered 300 feet above the campus of the NTOU. Complete with paired egg sacs this eye-catching bright-yellow copepod served as a beacon, guiding participants back to the campus and attracting considerable media coverage.

The grand opening ceremony started with a welcome message from the President of Taiwan, Shui-bian Chen, followed by welcome addresses from the President of NTOU, Jiann-Kuo WU, the President of NMMBA, Lee-Shing Fang and the President of WAC, Geoff Boxshall. During the ceremony, the opportunity was taken to congratulate Professor Ju-Shey Ho of California State University, USA (former president of WAC 1996-1999) in receiving the prestigious Science and Engineering Achievement Award, generally referred to as the “Taiwanese Nobel Prize”. This was awarded him by the Taiwanese-American Foundation, acknowledging his outstanding contributions to copepodology. Taiwanese by birth, Prof. Ho was also given The Special Contribution Award and The Youth Civil Leaders Award.

The conference itself was a great success with 226 participants representing 48 countries who contributed presentations (86 oral and 88 posters) and lively discussions. The organisation and facilities afforded the conference were superb. The local organisers also did a marvellous job in generating financial support for the meeting. One (of the many) satisfying results from this fund-raising activity was the financial support (in conjunction with WAC support) many students received to attend the meeting. During the meeting the succeeding President of WAC, Dr Kurt Schminke (Germany) was elected, and the venue for the next copepod conference (the 9th ICOC) decided...Tunisia will be the destination in 2005. The conference came to a spectacular end with a gourmet Taiwanese-style banquet featuring traditional Taiwanese entertainment. Special thanks from all the conference participants go out to our hosts at NTOU!

Pre-Conference Workshop: Copepod Biology and Systematics – Kenting, Taiwan

The week before the conference a week-long training course in Copepod Biology and Systematics was held at the National Museum for Marine Biology and Aquarium (NMMBA) at Kenting in southern Taiwan. There were over 70 applications for the course, but due to limitations of microscope availability only 33 students were selected for the course. Again the facilities at NMMBA were splendid and our hosts amazingly well organised and generous. Six tutors were involved: Geoff Boxshall (UK); Sophie Conroy-Dalton (UK); Rony Huys (UK); Carlos da Rocha (Brazil); Susumu Ohtsuka (Japan) and Grace Wyngaard (USA). The 33 students came from many

countries, including the Australia, Hong Kong, Iran, Japan, Kenya, Korea, Philippines, South Africa, Taiwan, Tunisia, UK and USA. The course was an intense learning experience for students and tutors alike! The practical sessions, which were based on the students' personal research material, were always challenging. You never knew what was coming next! Feedback from the students was that they found the workshop an invaluable experience. Considering the success of this workshop and the first workshop held in Svo Sebastivo, Brazil before the 7th ICOC in 1999, it is hoped that a tradition of pre-workshops now becomes established as an integral part of each future copepod conference. Our heart-felt thanks go to the organisers at NMMBA, without whom the workshop would not have been the success it was!



Sophie Conroy-Dalton, NHM, London.

37th European Marine Biology Symposium – Reykjavik, Iceland.

The 37th EMBS was jointly organised by the University of Iceland and the Marine Research Institute, Reykjavik, at the beginning of August. A small number of meiofaunologists were among the almost 200 participants and made both oral and poster contributions. The theme of the symposium was “Migration and Dispersal of Marine Organisms” – a topic of some importance to meiobenthology as we try to understand the apparently wide distribution patterns of many meiofaunal species, despite their lack of active dispersal stages. The symposium was a great success and there was much to learn from the wide range of presentations. The symposium website is still active (<http://www.37embs.is>) and has a list of oral and poster presentations along with some photos of the excursion to the beautiful glacial valley of Thorsmörk. The proceedings are to be published in *Hydrobiologia*. Next year's EMBS will be in Aveiro, Portugal.

Tim Ferrero

NEW MEMBERS

L.Della Patrona

Station aquaculture de saint Vincent

B.P 2059

Nouméa

New Caledonia

E-Mail: ldellapa@ifremer.fr

Dear Chairman,

I have worked for 15 years in shrimp aquaculture area first as biologist responsible of production at a 130 ha shrimp farm in New Caledonia (400 t/year) and after as researcher at IFREMER (French institute of marine research).

My interest in prawn culture has evolved progressively with time from optimisation of zootechnical practices to improve quality of pond environment, to better understanding of the function of the pond ecosystem and finally to evidence the importance of meiofauna not only for its trophic quantitative and qualitative contribution to *Penaeus stylirostris* but its hypothetical use as bioindicator of the quality of the sediment and finally its implication on health of shrimp.

As you see I am not a taxonomist!!!

To demonstrate to local prawn farmers the importance of well managing meiofauna in their shrimp ponds, I collected roughly meiofauna (2mm-60µm) weekly during 8 crops of 3 farms. Among my samples, 4 "groups" dominated. I identify easily nematodes, harpacticoids and jaws of Gnathostomula but I failed for one I suppose to be Cnidaria but I am not sure.

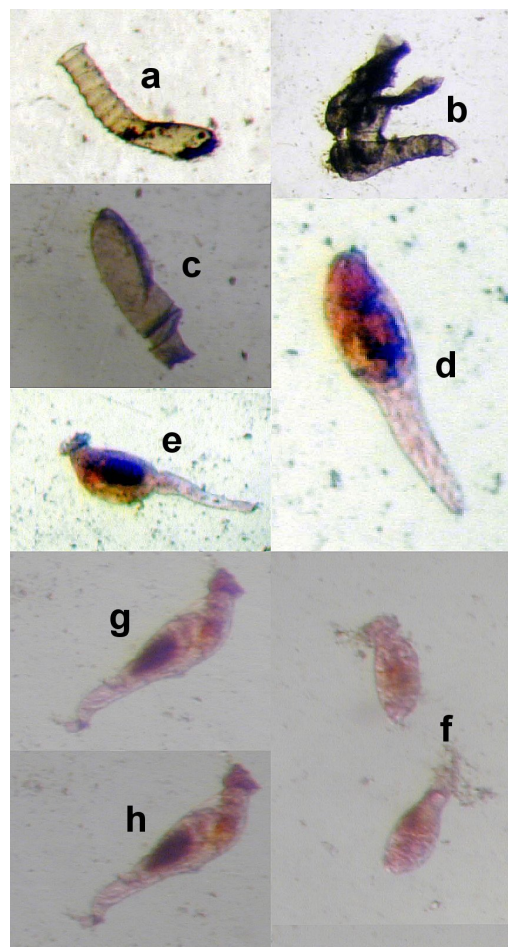
Therefore I would be very grateful if some meiobenthologist of Psammonalia could identify only at rank of sub phylum or class the pictures I joined (Its is very difficult for me to isolate a specimen in a meiofauna sub sample). Tubes 1, 2 and inconnu could be Campanularia spp.???

Rotd 3-7 could be Bortohydra spp.???

Furthermore, I would be very grateful if you could send me addresses of meiobenthologists whose research interests focus on meiobenthic ecology in tropical marine shrimp ponds.

In fact, for further research, I would be interested to learn if domination of a phylum in shrimp pond sediment could have some ecological significance or if it necessary to identify specimen to species rank or studying genetic evolution.

Thanking you in advance for your kind help



a = Tube1.jpg

b = Tube2.jpg

c = Tubeinconnu.jpg

d = Rotfd3.jpg

e = Rotfd4.jpg

f = Rotfd5.jpg

g = Rotfd6.jpg

h = Rotfd7.jpg

Please contact Della directly if you'd like to help her out.

Tania Nara Bezerra

Sportstraat 185
Gent 9000
BELGIUM
E-Mail: tanianara@pandora.be or
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Tel: +32 09 2204437

I defended my PhD thesis in March 2001 in Brazil "Nematofauna of a tropical sandy beach (Olinda's Isthmus-Pernambuco-Brazil)" I'm finishing two papers about it and you will be able to see the interesting results I got. Now I'm looking for a post-doc position where I can continue working with free-living nematodes.

Edmund O. Duarte

9775 Burgos Avenue
Oakland
California
CL 94605
USA

A graduate student at California State University Hayward studying the intertidal nematode community of San Francisco Bay whilst working for the Alameda County Department of Agriculture.

Change of Address

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Contacting Psammonalia:

To make sending us any news, articles or pictures easier, we have decided to set up a dedicated e-mail address for all correspondence:

psammon@nhm.ac.uk

this address is now working and we look forward to hearing from you. Of course, you can still write to us at the Natural History Museum – the address is on the front page.

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

RECENT LITERATURE

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