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The Newsletter of the International Association of Meiobenthologists

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Number 153, May 2010

Composed and Printed at:
Department of Zoology
Federal University of Pernambuco
Recife, PE, 50670-420 BRAZIL

Homage to Prof. Sebastian A. Gerlach

and Dr. Warwick L. Nicholas

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Oecologia (Berl.) 6, 176—190 (1971) © by Springer-Verlag 1971

On the Importance of Marine Meiofauna for Benthos Communities

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Received November 11, 1970

Summary. 1. In sublittoral sediments of silty sand live about 55000-1300000 medicians animals, which is a minimum figure because methods are not absolutely efficient.

2. Meiofauna biomass ranges from 0.2 to 2.0 g wet weight in sublittoral silty sand, that is about 2% of manufactors.

sand, that is about 3% of macrofauna biomass.

3. A higher percentage of mejofauna biomass is recorded from brackish water

3. A higher percentage of meiofauna biomass is recorded from brackish water regions, intertidal beaches and from the deep sea, where meiofauna and macrofauna biomass are of the same magnitude.
4. Overseen consumpting is meiofauna animals is between 200 and 2000 in

 Oxygen consumption in meiotauna animais is between 200 and 2000, in small macrofauna between 200 and 500, and in larger macrofauna between 10 and 100 mm³ O_d/h/g wet weight.

five times more active than that of macrofauna.

6. Generation time in meiofauna lasts from a few days as was observed in natural populations. For a

cultures, to one or a few years, as was observed in natural populations. For a generalization the guess is forwarded that three generations per year would be an average meiofauna value.

7. Life cycle turnover rate as calculated from life cycle models of two nema-

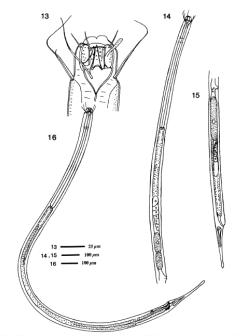
turnover rate or about 9 for mesonemous, which is about five times more than that in macrobenthos.

8. If one compares meiobenthos and macrobenthos, meiobenthos importance in terms of food consumed and in terms of biomass provided for the food chair in the companyity like and although meiobenthos in terms of the companyity like positive the companyity of the companyity

Introduction

Introduction

Meiofauna is present not only in the interstices of sand but also in soft bottom sediments which contain macrofauna in abundance, and which provide the food for commercially exploited fish and shrimp. For a better understanding of benthos productivity and benthis food chains, it is important, therefore, to evaluate the importance of meiobenthos in relation to macrobenthos. In this respect, one has to distinguish between the importance in terms of food consumed and the importance in terms of food provided for the food chain.



Figures 13–16. Holotype male and allotype female of Oxyonchus evelynae n.sp. 13. Head region of male; 14. Anterior body of female; 15. Posterior body of female; 16. Entire male.

Hydrobiologia 511: 47–64 (2004)

DON'T FORGET TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP IN IAM!
THE APPLICATION CAN BE FOUND AT THE END OF THIS ISSUE OR AT:
http://www.meiofauna.org/appform.html

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Editorial

Bom dia!

UnfortunatelyI have to begin with some sad news, during the last weeks two important nematologists/meiobenthologists passed away: Prof. Sebastian A. Gerlach and Dr. Warwick Nicholas for whom two friends wrote some nice words. They left us many important achievements during their careers, and are certainly examples to be followed.

Waiting to see most of you at Ghent during our Conference, Cheers, Paulo

Next Conference



The International Association of Meiobenthologists is pleased to invite you to participate in its 14th International Meiofauna Conference – FourtIMCo – in Ghent, Belgium, from July 12th – 16th 2010.

See program details in: http://www.fourtimco.ugent.be/index.asp

Other related Conferences

The 11th International Conference on Copepoda will be held in 2011, in Merida, Mexico. For more information on the 11th ICOC, contact the Chairman of the Local Organizing Committee, Eduardo Suarez-Morales at esuarez@ecosur.mx

New Members

Laura Ryckman, University of Texas Marine Science Institute, 750 Channel View Drive, Port Aransas, TX 78373 USA

e-mail: <u>Ryckman@mail.utexas.edu</u> Interests: Harpacticoid copepods

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Obituaries

Sebastian A Gerlach (17.06.2010)

Dear colleagues,

Today the sad news reached me that the former Professor of Benthos Ecology in Kiel, Sebastian A. Gerlach, passed away last Thursday, 17.06.2010. He was weakening since a few years, although there was a recovery from a serious break down in Sweden two years ago. My last encounter with him was when I transported the separate prints of his collected works to the meiofauna

group in Wilhelmshaven.

Prof. Gerlach started his academic career as a meiofauna taxonomist

(Nematoda) and doctoral student of Adolf Remane in Kiel and became in 1977

director of the Institut für Meeresforschung in Bremerhaven. He left this place when the AWI was founded to become full professor of benthos ecology and head of the Department of Marine Botany in the Institut für Meereskunde in Kiel (1981). Here he made a second career in pollution research and as coordinator of a large eutrophication project that initiated many other scientific works both in the North Sea and the Baltic region. He also coordinated for HELCOM the Second Periodic Assessment (GESPA) in 1989. He left his chair in 1991 and had an active life as an emeritus professor and sailor with his yacht "GAMLA". He leaves a family behind with his wife Christine and three children. Our sympathy is with his family.

Heye Rumohr (by e-mail)

Vale Warwick L. (Nick) Nicholas (3 April 1926 – 5 May 2010)

Warwick Nicholas (Nick) was one of the pioneering nematologists in Australia and the world. He died recently after battling cancer with his typical practical resolve since 2003. In addition to his scientific legacy, he leaves his wife Evelyn, 4 adult children and eleven grandchildren. Many colleagues attended his funeral in Canberra.

I knew Nic for thirty years, but this time covers barely half of his very long and wide-ranging scientific career, and it certainly does not cover all the different aspects of his work. Indeed, such was the range of topics, places and people involved that I cannot hope to do justice to them all.

Nick was born in England and had a far from settled childhood under the care of his mother and several relatives. His father died when Nick was guite young. At one stage he and his mother moved to Canada. He attended a number of different schools; from all reports only a few were happy experiences. At one stage, he had an enlarged lymph node removed, and was diagnosed with diphtheria, although after three weeks in diphtheria and scarlet-fever wards the diagnosis turned out to be tonsillitis. After finishing school during the 2nd World War, he trained to become a pilot, first in the UK, then in the USA. Nick had a great deal of flying experience, much of it solo, but the war ended before he took up active service. After the war, pilot training was ceased, and Nick returned to the UK for more training as a radar mechanic. finished his military service in 1946 as a petty officer.

After demobilization, Nick took up the opportunity to go to university, where he studied zoology and other sciences at the University of Liverpool, graduating in 1951. He completed a doctorate at the Liverpool Institute of Tropical Diseases working on insect-vectored diseases in west Africa. Through various outside influences Nick was left to complete this research virtually unaided. but it was completed successfully and marked the beginning

of a career-long association with nematodes. Here found his true calling, and his life-long partner, his wife Evelyn.

There followed a period of career instability with various short-term positions and projects, including work on another group of small parasitic worms, the Acanthocephala, which was also to continue throughout his career. During this period Nick continued to work nematode parasites on ofvertebrates, but also entered the then novel field of nutritional requirements and culture of nematodes.

Nick arrived in Australia in 1960 to take up a senior lectureship at the then Canberra University College, soon to become The Australian National University. Apart from brief periods on sabbatical, he remained at ANU for the rest of his long career. When he joined, the department consisted of a professor, his secretary, the chief laboratory administrator, six students, and Nick, all housed in a "fibro" hut shared with Botany, Chemistry and Physics. Those were true pioneering days.

At ANU Nick continued to work on culturing and nutrition of free-living nematodes, vertebrate-parasitic nematodes and Acanthocephala, in addition to supervising postgraduate students and lecturing. Later, he added other types of nematodes and little known taxonomic groups to the list of animals studied.

He was, with the late Alan Bird, one of the early editors of the Australasian Nematologists Newsletter. He was instrumental in setting up the Australian Society for Parasitology. He served on many committees and advisory boards, including the ABRS advisory board. He lead the Zoology Department at ANU for quite a few years in total over several intervals, although he was never appointed Professor, which was a disappointment to him.

For most of his career, Nick passionate about the nematodes. He studied human. vertebrate and invertebrate parasites, free-living forms in beaches and swamps from Melbourne to Darwin. He studied feeding and energetics in the laboratory. He studied behaviour, ecology. epidemiology, biochemistry. and taxonomy. described 35 new species and 5 new genera of nematodes, which is a sizeable chunk of the known fauna of Australia. Not content with that, he described 3 of the 12 species of gastrotrichs known from Australia, the last published only a vears ago. He worked Nematomorpha and Acanthocephala as well. All these names may mean very little to most, but they demonstrate Nick's tremendous interest in real scientific problems, and starting from where nothing or very little was known never deterred him.

Nick literally gave the world the nematode Caenorhabditis elegans. which is used a model organism for studying nutrition, development and ageing. He and wife Evelyn travelled to America by ship in the late 1950's with vials of culture in his pocket and the recipe for keeping the cultures alive in notebook. (Those his were less biosecurity-conscious days.) Nick used his intimate knowledge of nematodes to choose this species carefully, so that it would both culture without any other organisms present, and survive the then lengthy travelling times. So good was Nick's choice, that *Caenorhabditis* has been studied around the world ever since. The axenic cultures of *C. elegans* were an essential condition for the studies that lead to the 2002 Nobel Prize awarded to Horvitz, Brenner and It is a measure of the importance of the cultures which Nick started, that right up to the present, he was still being contacted for information about their origin from around the His studies on energetics are world. still used as the basis for calculating energy flows and food requirements in nematodes.

Nick produced many things scientific. He wrote many papers over 55 years of scientific publishing; many of the 119 papers are still cited. Modern search tools list over 1000 references to his papers; it is a measure of impact that this is an impressive figure even though many papers were written and cited before the advent of the modern tools. He wrote a book which went through 2 editions. He had many PhD and Masters students; I was one. Such was the range of his interests that we, his students, have gone many different ways.

More than anything Nick produced ideas, and shared his experience. He was always open but forthright, and willing to share his time (except when his favourite soap opera was on!). Despite these achievements, Nick was always down-to-earth and dismissive of those seeking status for its own sake. His exploits and anecdotes enlivened the staff room at what became known as BoZo at ANU for many years.

By any measure, by his scientific impact, through his writings, by the students he has left, and in the personal and scholarly interactions we all had with Nick, the scientific community was lucky to have known him.

Mike Hodda (by e-mail)

Recent Literature

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Editor's Acknowledgments

For their help and contribution for this number, I would like to thank Jyotsna Sharma for comments on a first draft of the issue, Adriane Wandeness for gathering the recent literature and Visnu Sarmento for gathering emails of meiofauna authors that are still not IAM members.

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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 midmonth in January and July. Membership is open to any person who actively is interested in the study of meiofauna. Annual membership dues are EU\$10 (US\$10) and payment for up to 3 years in advance is possible. New members will receive Psammonalia beginning with the January issue of the year joining. Additional contributions to the **Bertil Swedmark Fund**, used to support student attendance at the triennial conferences, is encouraged.

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