



Harald SCHILLHAMMER was born in 1960 in Mistelbach, a small town some 40 km north of Vienna, Austria. From his early childhood days on he was keen on exploring every corner of his immediate environment and developed an ever growing interest in practically everything that nature brought forth, in the beginning especially minerals and fossils. During the first years in secondary school he found an untiring supporter in the person of his biology teacher who was hard put to quench his thirst for knowledge. It was at the age of fifteen when his interest increasingly switched over to living things and his mineralogical holiday excursions were more and more used to collect all kinds of insects. After his abiture (1978) and after having passed through military service he started to study biology at university in 1979. Realizing that covering all groups of insects is too big a task for one man he eventually reduced his activities to the Coleoptera and began a faunistic inventory of the surroundings of his home town. On the occasion of a visit to the public part of the Natural History Museum in Vienna his sight was caught by a special exhibition dedicated to the late Prof. Scheerpeltz, who during his lifetime was one of the leading authorities on Staphylinidae. Immediately he felt his scientific heart irresistibly drawn toward this large family of almost countless species. Soon afterwards (1984) he started as a volunteer in the entomology department of the museum. In 1989 he was officially employed, succeeding the retired technician of the Coleoptera section, and became a member of the "Vienna Coleopterists' Society", where he still contributes to editorial activities on the journals produced by this society. Since his main focus is on the subfamily Staphylininae from East and Southeast Asia, he has made numerous expeditions to various Asian countries (Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, China, Laos), where he has gathered a large number of new genera and species, many of which are still awaiting description. Torn between enthusiasm and despair in face of the overwhelming diversity of the Staphylinidae, he emphatically carries on to add bit by bit to the taxonomic structure of this beetle family, willing to learn from the wise and convey to the inexperienced.