

Introductory Address

Ladies and Gentlemen, dear Friends:

I thank you very much for attending this first International Symposium for Alticinae Workers and for making the long trip to Munich. Let us remember the many friends who wanted to come but were not able to do so for financial, political, or other reasons. I would very much like to welcome you all to Munich.

I would like to thank Terry Seeno for all his assistance in organizing this symposium. He was also the one who had the idea of this symposium. Thank you also for the honour of voting Munich as the location for this symposium.

Also I would like to thank Dr. E. J. Fittkau, the director of the Zoologische Staatssammlung, Munich, who sends his regards and best wishes. He made it possible to hold this meeting at the Zoologische Staatssammlung and offered his room and his secretary's services for the time of the symposium.

We are only a few people, but I hope that this fact will make this symposium even more effective. When we remember the large congresses, they are too big for real communication because it is necessary to divide papers into many sections and symposiums. For example, our Spanish geneticists would read their paper in the section on genetics but it should be of interest to us all. One could say, one should hear this lecture in the genetics section, but let's confess, who can listen to all the lectures of interest at a monster-congress. Also, several interesting topics are always being discussed simultaneously. Anyway, communication suffers at a large congress.

First of all I had in mind to prepare a fixed program which I could offer you, but as we know from larger meetings, such programs are changed several times. So I thought that because we are such a small group that it will be possible to talk about the schedule which I offered you.

I am sure that when another meeting of Alticinae workers is held, the number of attendants will increase. The first International Congress of Entomology in Bruxelles 1910 had 250 members, now they have thousands of participants.

Our workshop is mixed and it could not be done better. We will hear about genetics and morphology of the metafemoral apodeme, both as contribution to taxonomy. Workers in many other entomological groups don't dare to dream about such combinations. We will hear also of zoogeographical questions and how to use them for taxonomy and many other things dealing with Alticinae.

I estimate the Alticinae at about 8000 known species with approximately 600 genera. I was hoping to provide you accurate data of species and genera, for I thought my punch card index would be completed for this meeting. But I had some bad luck with the man who worked on this index. So it is not completed yet and I am sorry that I can not give you exact data.

As you see, the flea beetles are of great interest not only to taxonomists working on them, but also to geneticists, morphologists and applied entomologists – because many of the Alticinae prove to be serious pests. They are of interest to zoogeographers, ecologists, and even chemists when we think of pheromones or the arrow poison of the bushmen in Africa.

I thank you once more for coming and let us hope for a good and successful symposium. I hope that you will enjoy your stay in Munich and that you will find our meeting both profitable and enjoyable.

Thank you very much.

Gerhard Scherer

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Zoologisch-Botanische Datenbank/Zoological-Botanical Database

Digitale Literatur/Digital Literature

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