

MANFRED DÖBERL
16.01.933 - 12.05.2016



Manfred Döberl in Beutelsbach (Photo: M. Schmitt)

In memoriam Manfred Döberl (1933-2016)

Elisabeth Geiser & Michael Schmitt

Our colleague and friend Manfred Döberl passed away on 12th May 2016. Although he was nearly wheelchair-bound in his last years, he continued working on flea beetles and answering questions of colleagues in a helpful and humorous manner as ever.

Manfred Döberl (Fig. 1) contributed greatly to our

knowledge of flea beetles (Alticini). His publications show only a part of his work. He supported countless colleagues with his friendly advice and by corrections and additions to their publications. In most of these cases, he was mentioned only in the Acknowledgements.



Fig. 1. Manfred Döberl, 30.10.2004, in Beutelsbach (Germany). Photo: Michael Schmitt

Manfred Döberl was born on 26th January 1933 in Kaiserslautern (Rhineland-Palatinate). The family moved to the district of Niederbayern (Lower Bavaria). He joined the college of education at Straubing, where he met his future wife, and became a primary school teacher. At first he was employed in some small villages until he finally could settle in Abensberg, where he later became the headmaster. In 1960 he married Margit Dietl, who

was always very supportive to his coleopterological addiction. Through many years he regularly joined the annual meeting of Central European coleopterists at Beutelsbach (near Stuttgart, Germany), at least since 2004 accompanied by his wife. Because of health problems in his later years it was only with her help that he could attend this meeting, last time in 2008 (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2. Margit and Manfred Döberl in Beutelsbach, 25.10.2008. Photo: Michael Schmitt

Unlike most entomologists who started as teenagers, Manfred Döberl was 30 years old when in 1963 his „entomological infection“ happened. In the school library he detected the book by Gottfried AMANN „Kerfe des Waldes“ (1960, woodland insects). He was fascinated by it, in particular when he succeeded in identifying the red poplar leaf beetle (*Chrysomela populi*). As a consequence, he started collecting and identifying beetles (Fig. 3).

As a sociable and amiable person, Manfred Döberl soon got into contact with other Bavarian coleopterologists. Geographically nearest to him was Hans Schaefflein from Straubing, where Manfred Döberl could see for the first time a comprehensive private collection. Hans Schaefflein was an expert for the water beetle family Dytiscidae. Soon Manfred Döberl realised that he, too, needed to specialise if he wanted to gain in-depth knowledge. He decided to concentrate on Alticini. He learned a great deal from his visits to the flea beetle specialist Lilly Wachnitz in Grafenau (Bayerischer Wald).

Fortunately, the head of the coleopterological department of the Bavarian State Collection in Munich, Gerhard Scherer, was also an expert on Alticini, especially of the species of the southern hemisphere. Gerhard Scherer organised an International Symposium on Alticini in 1980 in Munich. For this reason Manfred Döberl reactivated his almost forgotten knowledge of the English language and extended his network of friends to colleagues from various parts of the world. This resulted in collaborative field trips and joint papers. Several museums benefited

from his visits, such as the Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle in Geneve (Switzerland), and also the Natural History Museum in Ljubljana (Slovenia) where he revised the Chrysomelidae collection of Slovenia, to mention only two museums here.

Revision of collections and publication of papers are the usual elements of contribution to scientific knowledge. It is also quite common that highly renowned specialists give advice to polite and serious questions of colleagues, whether established or in statu nascendi. Manfred Döberl's contribution to science via this channel was enormous. I (E.G.) myself benefited a lot from his support especially as a Non-Alticini expert.

When I started to specialise on Chrysomelidae I soon realised that it will reduce the quality of my own work if I include the large group of Alticini. Later on for my book (GEISER 2001) on the beetles of Salzburg, I compiled the records of each beetle species there. Then I sent my manuscript in parts to specialists of the different Coleoptera groups to check it for plausibility and to add some records which I might have overlooked. On this occasion Manfred Döberl revised the whole Alticini collection of the Natural History Museum „Haus der Natur“ in Salzburg and supported me with additional records from Austria. Due to his network he was an important source of knowledge on Alticini in Central Europe and beyond. I also got a lot of support from him while I worked on the Checklist of Chrysomelidae of Austria. Here, I checked for each species if there are reliable records existing.



Fig. 3. Manfred Döberl collecting flea beetles using a sweep-net designed by himself (see DÖBERL 2008b) and manufactured with the help of his wife, Margit, in 1989, Courtesy of Margit Döberl.

Therefore, I revised many Chrysomelidae specimens in various museums, but not the Alticinae, where I only compiled the records. The corrections and additional remarks of Manfred Döberl were essential for 40 % of the quality of this list. Such amiable support to the benefit of colleagues was typical for him.

I (M.S.) met Manfred the first time, on January 8, 1984, on the occasion of the annual coleopterists meeting, in those days held at Ludwigsburg near Stuttgart. Asked by Horst Kippenberg, I presented a talk on the topic of my doctoral dissertation, the phylogeny of the Crioce-rinae. Manfred asked me in the following coffee break: „Do you only do phylogenetics or also taxonomy?“. Surprised by the insinuation that taxonomy could be estimated higher than phylogenetics, I discussed with him the importance of taxonomic expertise. I learned from this discussion that without a sound taxonomic base all organismal biological science runs the risk of starting from uncertain ground.

Manfred was one of those colleagues who founded the working group on leaf- and seed-beetle faunistics in Central Europe, ChryFaun, in 1987 (SCHMITT et al. 2014). In those times, he did not use a personal computer for his en-

tomological work, and e-mail was not in sight. Thus, he contributed to our project by dictating label data on audio cassette and sending them by mail, so that we could type the data into our database. In 2008, my (M.S.) diploma student Thomas Rönn visited Manfred and worked for a whole week in his collection, extracting data on Central European records for ChryFaun and the diploma thesis (see SCHMITT & RÖNN 2011). During this week, Thomas shared Margit's and Manfred's family life and received free board all the time.

Manfred Döberl's broad interests on classical and Bavarian music and Bavarian culture and literature resulted in some typical sentences of his letters, where he liked to imitate the style of Ludwig Thoma's „Josef Filser Letters“ if the recipient would (and could) appreciate it.

His cheerfulness continued even in his last years, when he was not able any more to attend the scientific meetings. This was very hard for such a sociable man. He continued working on his collection (Fig. 4), describing new Alticini species, publishing papers and answering e-mails. Manfred's collection is a remarkable achievement by itself, containing thousands of meticulously spread, mounted, labelled and identified specimens. To house the collection, Manfred built drawers by himself. Although reasonable quality drawers were available for purchase, they were not good enough to hold Manfred's precious specimens. The collection and his library are bequeathed to Ulf Arnold in Berlin. Each specimen of the collection will be labelled there with: „ex coll. M. Döberl/Abensberg, 2016/ coll. U. Arnold, Berlin“.

The address of this collection is now:

Ulf Arnold, Eichendorffstr. 52, D-15370 Fredersdorf, Germany E-mail: floralandarnold@aol.com.

So his work will be continued, although we cannot ask him anymore, once knowing that we would get a quick, competent, friendly und humorous answer. A good portion of humour characterises Manfred's entire view of the world. But this humour was accompanied by a surprising degree of empathy. In spite of his rather big physical appearance, he was sensitive and tender-hearted. He felt earnestly offended when someone accused him of being harsh or impolite.

When he watched the photograph of fig. 1 (already published in GEISER 2016 and SCHMITT 2017), he asked me (M.S.) to use this picture when I would write a necrology, because then people will know that this was someone who enjoyed laughing („dann wissen die Leut, das war einer, der gern gelacht hat“). Even three days before he passed away, he asked his family not to forget the laughing („vergesst mir das Lachen nicht!“).

Manfred Doeberl died in his home in the circle of his family. He is survived by his wife Margit, three children and seven grandchildren.



Fig. 4. Manfred Döberl in his private study in Abensberg (The bottle of wine – Corsaire 2009 - was a present by M.S. to Manfred), 9.8.2010. Photo: Michael Schmitt.

Taxa dedicated to Manfred Döberl

- Achaenops manfredi* Schöller, 2017 (Chrysomelidae: Cryptocephalini)
Acrocrypta doeberli Medvedev, 2010 (Chrysomelidae: Alticini)
Acrocrypta manfredi Telnov, 2014 (Chrysomelidae: Alticini)
Aphthonoides doeberli Gómez-Zurita, 2017 (Chrysomelidae: Alticini)
Brahmina doeberli Keith, 2012 (Scarabaeidae: Melolonthinae)
Burodromas doeberli Beenen, 2017 (Chrysomelidae: Galerucini)
Chrysolina (Timarchomela) doeberli Daccordi & Yang, 2009 (Chrysomelidae: Chrysomelinae)
Cryptocephalus doeberli Schöller, 2017 (Chrysomelidae: Cryptocephalini)
Doeberlia Warchałowski, 2007 (Synonym of *Chrysolina* Subgenus *Timarchomela* Achard, 1922)
(Chrysomelidae: Chrysomelinae)
Doeberllepta Wagner, 2017 (Chrysomelidae: Galerucini)
Doeberlnota Prathapan, Ruan & Konstantinov, 2017 (Chrysomelidae: Alticini)
Euphitrea doeberli Warchałowski, 1998 (Chrysomelidae: Alticini)
Hemipyxis doeberli Medvedev, 2009 (Chrysomelidae: Alticini)
Hemipyxis manfredi Medvedev, 2011 (Chrysomelidae: Alticini)
Hyphasis doeberli Medvedev, 2008 (Chrysomelidae: Alticini)
Longitarsus manfredi Fritzlar, 2004 (Chrysomelidae: Alticini)

- Luperogala doeberli* Bezděk, 2017 (Chrysomelidae: Galerucini)
Luperus doeberli Vela & Bastazo, 2017 (Chrysomelidae: Galerucini)
Menippus doeberli Suenaga, Lee & Bezděk, 2017 (Chrysomelidae: Galerucini)
Omocerus (Paratauroma) doeberli Dabrowska & Borowiec, 1995 (Chrysomelidae: Cassidini)
Plagiosterna magellanica doeberli Sprecher-Übersax & Daccordi, 2017 (Chrysomelidae: Chrysomelinae)
Psyllototus doeberli Bukejs & Nadein, 2013 (Fossil) (Chrysomelidae: Alticini)
Rohania doeberli Beenen, 2011 (Chrysomelidae: Galerucini)
Scirtes doeberli Klausnitzer, 2017 (Scirtidae)
Sphaeroderma doeberli Medvedev, 1997 (Chrysomelidae: Alticini)
Taizonia doeberli (Medvedev, 2003) (Chrysomelidae: Alticini)

List of Taxa described by Manfred Döberl

From 1986 to 2015 Manfred Döberl described six genera and 149 species

- | | |
|---|---|
| <i>Acrocrypta cebuensis</i> (2001b) | <i>Aphthonoides langbianus</i> (2005) |
| <i>Acrocrypta haemorrhoidalis</i> (2001b) | <i>Aphthonoides lopatini</i> (2005) |
| <i>Acrocrypta incisa</i> (2001b) | <i>Aphthonoides pilosellus</i> (2005) |
| <i>Acrocrypta medvedevi</i> (2001b) | <i>Aphthonoides prathapani</i> (2005) |
| <i>Acrocrypta nigra</i> (2001b) | <i>Aphthonoides schereri</i> (1991b) |
| <i>Acrocrypta novemmaculata</i> (2001b) | <i>Aphthonoides sprecherae</i> (2005) |
| <i>Acrocrypta octopunctata</i> (2001b) | <i>Aphthonoides sumatranus</i> (2005) |
| <i>Acrocrypta signata</i> (2001b) | <i>Aphthonoides taiwanicus</i> (2005) |
| <i>Acrocrypta similis</i> (2001b) | <i>Aphthonoides vietnamicus</i> (2005) |
| <i>Acrocrypta sprecherae</i> (2001b) | <i>Batophila alticola</i> (2003a) |
| <i>Altica malverna</i> (2010b) | <i>Batophila dogueti</i> (1994b) |
| <i>Altica nigeriana</i> (2010b) | <i>Batophila nepalica</i> (2003a) |
| <i>Altica shuteae</i> (2010b) | <i>Batophila taiwanica</i> (2010a) |
| <i>Altica wagneri</i> (2010b) | <i>Benedictus andersoni</i> Sprecher-Uebersax, Konstantinov, Prathapan & Döberl (2009) |
| <i>Amydus gibbicollis</i> (1991b) | <i>Benedictus bagmati</i> Sprecher-Uebersax, Konstantinov, Prathapan & Döberl (2009) |
| <i>Aphthona kachinensis</i> (2015) | <i>Benedictus belousovi</i> Sprecher-Uebersax, Konstantinov, Prathapan & Döberl (2009) |
| <i>Aphthona langeri</i> (2015) | <i>Benedictus cangshanicus</i> Sprecher-Uebersax, Konstantinov, Prathapan & Döberl (2009) |
| <i>Aphthona socotrana</i> (2012b) | <i>Benedictus chiangmaiensis</i> Sprecher-Uebersax, Konstantinov, Prathapan & Döberl (2009) |
| <i>Aphthonoides bergeali</i> (2005) | <i>Benedictus chilalla</i> Sprecher-Uebersax, Konstantinov, Prathapan & Döberl (2009) |
| <i>Aphthonoides besucheti</i> (1991b) | <i>Benedictus dochula</i> Sprecher-Uebersax, Konstantinov, Prathapan & Döberl (2009) |
| <i>Aphthonoides burckhardti</i> (2005) | <i>Benedictus ha</i> Sprecher-Uebersax, Konstantinov, Prathapan & Döberl (2009) |
| <i>Aphthonoides gerhardi</i> (2005) | |
| <i>Aphthonoides indicus</i> (2005) | |
| <i>Aphthonoides keralaensis</i> (2005) | |
| <i>Aphthonoides konstantinovi</i> (2005) | |

- Benedictus kabaki* Sprecher-Uebersax, Konstantinov, Prathapan & Döberl (2009)
- Benedictus kurbatovi* Sprecher-Uebersax, Konstantinov, Prathapan & Döberl (2009)
- Benedictus lauribina* Sprecher-Uebersax, Konstantinov, Prathapan & Döberl (2009)
- Benedictus luzonicus* Sprecher-Uebersax, Konstantinov, Prathapan & Döberl (2009)
- Benedictus medvedevi* (1991b)
- Benedictus nigrinus* Sprecher-Uebersax, Konstantinov, Prathapan & Döberl (2009)
- Benedictus nobding* Sprecher-Uebersax, Konstantinov, Prathapan & Döberl (2009)
- Benedictus rubropunctatus* Sprecher-Uebersax, Konstantinov, Prathapan & Döberl (2009)
- Benedictus shivalayanicus* Sprecher-Uebersax, Konstantinov, Prathapan & Döberl (2009)
- Benedictus sichuanensis* Sprecher-Uebersax, Konstantinov, Prathapan & Döberl (2009)
- Benedictus thumbsila* Sprecher-Uebersax, Konstantinov, Prathapan & Döberl (2009)
- Benedictus tibetanus* Sprecher-Uebersax, Konstantinov, Prathapan & Döberl (2009)
- Benedictus yatongla* Sprecher-Uebersax, Konstantinov, Prathapan & Döberl (2009)
- Bezdekaltica* (2012b)
- Bezdekaltica socotrana* (2012b)
- Ceylonaltica saueri* (1996b)
- Ceylonaltica tarsata* (1996b)
- Clavicornaltica rileyi* (2003b)
- Clavicornaltica takizawai* (2009b)
- Epitrix krali* (2000b)
- Epitrix muehlei* (2000b)
- Euphitrea parva* (2011)
- Garuda schereri* (1996b)
- Haemaltica indica* (2002a)
- Haemaltica wiesneri* (1986)
- Hemipyxis abdominalis* (2007a)
- Hemipyxis andrzeji* (2007a)
- Hemipyxis bezdeki* (2011)
- Hemipyxis difficilis* (2007a)
- Hemipyxis erberi* (2007a)
- Hemipyxis kachinensis* (2011)
- Hemipyxis kimotoi* (2007a)
- Hemipyxis margitae* (2007a)
- Hemipyxis medvedevi* (2011)
- Hemipyxis nigrivertex* (2007a)
- Hemipyxis pseudoprivigna* (2007a)
- Hemipyxis schereri* (2007a)
- Hemipyxis vietnamica* (2007a)
- Hemipyxis wangi* (2007a)
- Hemipyxoides* (2007a)
- Hermaphysa flavitarsa* (1991b)
- Hespera bhutanensis* (2009b)
- Hespera heissi* (2015)
- Ivalia nigrina* (2009b)
- Lesagealtica* (2009b)
- Lesagealtica laurenti* (2009b)
- Letzuella chinensis* (2011)
- Longitarsus atlanticus* (2002b)
- Longitarsus cizeki* (2004)
- Longitarsus fuscicornis* (2011)
- Longitarsus heinigi* (2002b)
- Longitarsus impressus* (2009b)
- Longitarsus neckeri* (2011)
- Longitarsus pahangensis* (2011)
- Luperomorpha biondii* (2012b)
- Luperomorpha nigerrima* (2015)
- Mandarella kippenbergi* (2015)
- Mandarella viridis* (2015)
- Minota chinensis* (2007e)
- Minota medvedevi* (2007e)
- Minota nepalensis* (2007e)
- Nepalicropis himalayensis* (1991b)
- Nepalicropis schereri* (1991b)
- Nisotra burmanica* (2015)
- Ogloblinia keralaensis* (2003b)
- Paraminotella* Döberl & Konstantinov (2003)
- Paraminotella nepalensis* (1991b) (Döberl & Konstantinov, 2003 – new combination)

Paraminotella nigrata Döberl & Konstantinov (2003)
Parexosoma beeneni (1995a)
Phyllotreta muehlei (2010c)
Phyllotreta schuelkei (2011)
Phyllotreta zerchei (1998a)
Psylliodes belarbii (1991a)
Psylliodes erberi (1995d)
Psylliodes gruevi (2009b)
Psylliodes kachinensis (2015)
Psylliodes wunderlei (1998a)
Schenklingia smetanai (2010a) (= *Halticorcus* Lea, 1917)
Sumatrahaltica (2007d)
Taizonia loebli (1991b)
Torodera borneensis (1998b)
Torodera loebli (1998b)
Torodera minor (1998b)
Toroderoides quadrimaculata (1998b)
Toroderoides wiesneri (1998b)
Trachyaphthona indica (2003b)
Warchaltica (2007c)
Warchaltica brenneri (2007c)
Xuthea (Haemaltica) burmanica (2015)
Yemenaltica furthi (2012b)
Yetialtica (1991b)
Yetialtica besucheti (1991b)

Complete List of Manfred Döberl's publications

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- DÖBERL, M. 1994c: Bemerkenswerte Alticinenfunde aus Westeuropa (Col., Chrysomelidae). – Entomologische Nachrichten und Berichte **38**: 179–182.
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- DÖBERL, M. 1998c: Alticinae. – Pp. 319–323 in: LUCHT, W. H. & KLAUSNITZER, B. (Eds.): Die Käfer Mitteleuropas, Band 15 (4. Supplementband). – Jena: Gustav Fischer Verlag, 398 pp.
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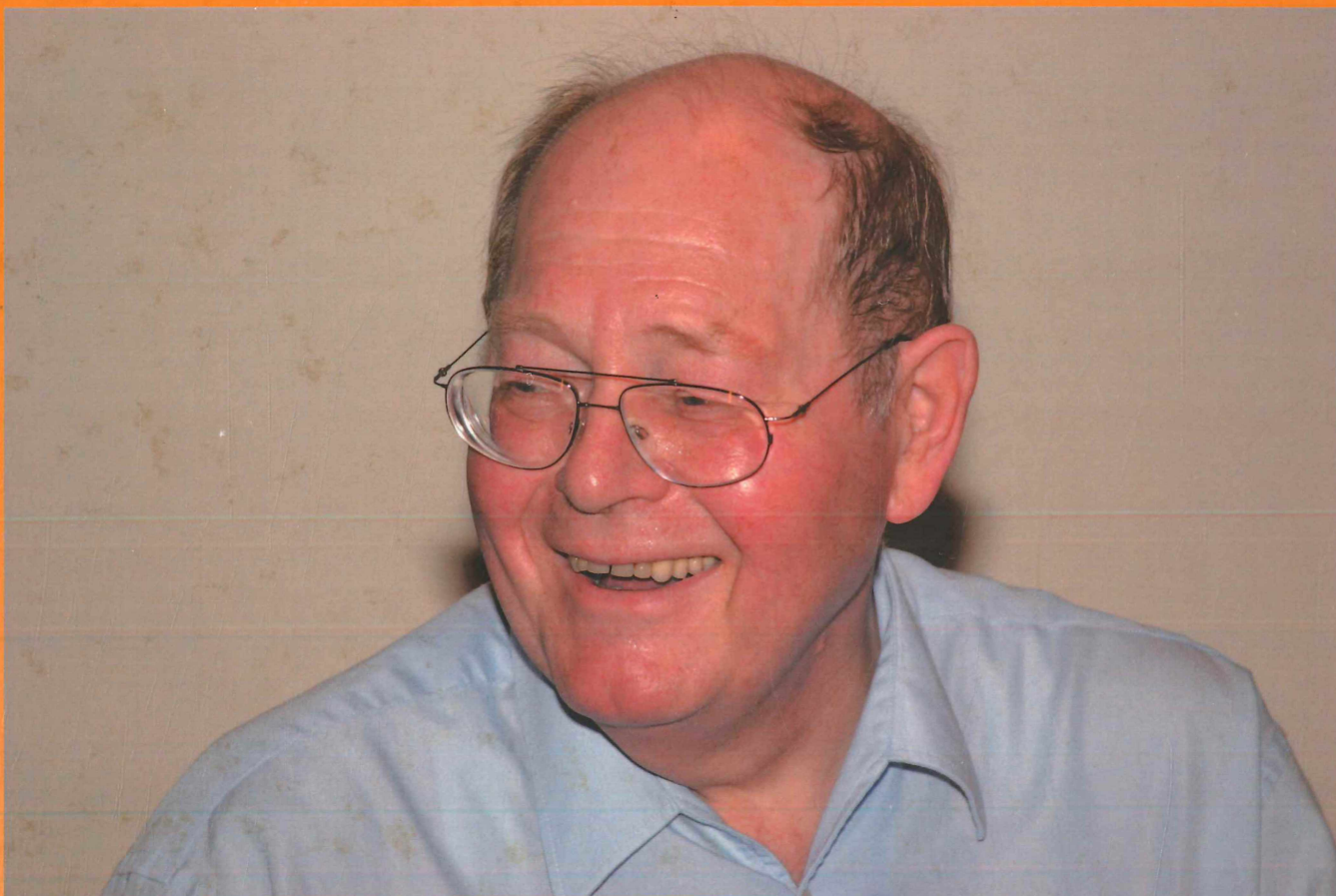
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MANFRED DÖBERL, 30.10.2004, in Beutelsbach (Germany) Photo: Michael Schmitt

Manfred Döberl was an expert on taxonomy of flea beetles (Coleoptera: Chrysomelidae: Galerucinae: Alticini). He studied flea beetles for 30 years discovering and describing 155 new taxa – 6 new genera and 149 new species, publishing 64 research papers. However, it is not just this tremendous contribution to flea beetle taxonomy that brought 33 authors from 21 countries together to submit 21 papers to the present memorial volume. In addition to our admiration for Manfred's scientific merits, we regarded him highly as a supportive colleague and an amiable person. Manfred left ever lasting impression on those who keep their interest in flea beetles as well as on the science of beetle taxonomy in general. We enjoyed his spirit of humour, his warm charisma, his inexhaustible readiness to help, his true friendship.

Although Manfred Döberl worked and published taxonomically nearly exclusively on flea beetles, he was interested in all aspects of leaf beetle biology, general science and history. The present volume reflects only in part the breadth of Manfred's scientific horizon. Nevertheless, it illustrates not only the personal affections of the authors but also the multifariousness of leaf (and other) beetle biology that sparks fascination for these creatures and for science in general.