



New Honorary members of the SEL 2019

by Erik J. van Nieuwerkerken (SEL President)

The General Meeting in Campobasso elected two new Honorary members for the Society, David Agassiz (UK) (figs 1, 2) and Ole Karsholt (DK) (figs 1, 3). Both long time active and influential members of SEL who started their lepidopterist careers as amateurs and turned into professionals. Here I'll present an abstract of the laudatio, read at the meeting.

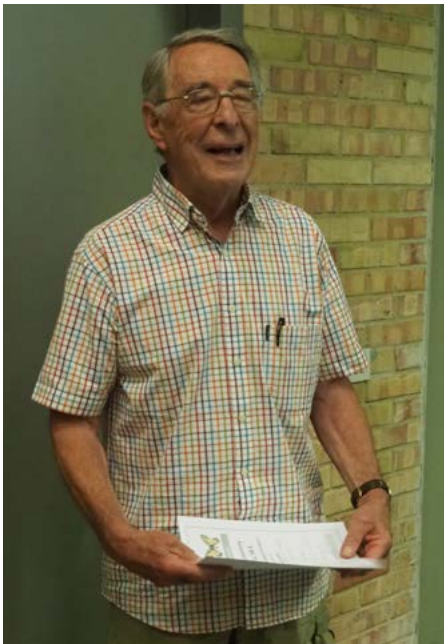


Figure 1. New SEL Honorary Members David Agassiz (above) and Ole Karsholt (below).

David Agassiz

Born in Colwall, Herefordshire, UK, David Agassiz has been a keen lepidopterist for most of his life. With a BA in mathematics from Oxford in 1964, he later studied theology and was a priest for 27 years, got his doctorate in 1994 from Imperial College, was a Training Officer for IIE from 1995–1997, and was appointed a Scientific Associate of the Natural History Museum, London in 1997. David has been an active member of SEL since 1982 and has been a council member for 15 years, from 1994–1998 as General Secretary, ordinary council member from 2000–2002, vice president from 2002–2005 and again General Secretary from 2005–2011. David visited most SEL congresses and once lead an Easter service during the SEL conference in Helsinki. David is most renowned for his work on the British Lepidoptera, for his work on invasive Lepidoptera, and on tropical micromoths, particularly the African fauna. He has published widely but specialised

especially on Yponomeutoidea, Gelechioidea (Gelechiidae) and Pyraloidea. His publishing career spans a remarkable 62 years starting in 1957 and reaching 154 publications by 2019. David obtained his PhD in 1994, focusing on the population dynamics of invasive Lepidoptera. A notable product of his fieldwork in Africa has been his work on the rich moth fauna associated with *Acacia*. David's most recent and astounding discovery was showing the presence of stridulatory organs on the wings of *Yponomeuta*, that almost certainly act as a form of acoustic aposematism against bats. David has been a prime mover in the African Lepidoptera Network, with meetings in Ghana, Poland, Madagascar. David is always a pleasure to work with, both in the field and museum, happy to share his knowledge and expertise without condescension. His approach to life is refreshing, with a straightforward approach coming with a disdain for layers of bureaucracy.



Figure 2. New SEL Honorary member David Agassiz receiving the certificate from SEL President Erik van Nieuwerkerken.

Ole Karsholt

Ole Karsholt was born in Copenhagen, Denmark. He first qualified as a schoolteacher and taught in primary and secondary school between 1971 and 1981. He started collecting Lepidoptera in 1961 and soon the Danish lepidopterist Niels L. Wolff became his mentor. In 1972, he met Ebbe S. Nielsen with whom he published the first 'modern' checklist of Danish Lepidoptera in 1976. In 1981 he took up the position at the Zoological Museum as collections manager of Lepidoptera and assistant to Niels P. Kristensen until 2016. Ole has been an active member of SEL since 1984, visiting many SEL congresses and is a member of the editorial board of *Nota Lepidopterologica* since long. As collection manager for Lepidoptera, Ole was responsible for curating the col-

lections according to international standards, and assisting researchers across the world. When Ole joined the museum the Lepidoptera collection held approximately 1 million specimens, when he retired 35 years later the number was twice that size. This was partly due to his active collecting activities on several international fieldtrips and partly due to his close contact with the Danish amateur lepidopterists. Ole has always taken the time to share his encyclopedia-like knowledge of especially European microlepidoptera with anyone who asked him. Since his first publication in 1973, Ole has authored a staggering number of more than 200 publications. While most of his early publications focused on faunistics, he soon started working on taxonomy and systematics. Ole's scientific work has been char-

acterized by an extraordinarily broad international collaboration, and recently he has engaged in a fruitful collaboration with molecular systematists that resulted in a number of important publications. Ole has always recognized the value of accurate and updated checklists for scientific and curatorial purposes. He has been a driving force behind the regularly updated Danish Lepidoptera catalogue, *The Lepidoptera of Europe*, the recent *Nordic-Baltic checklist*, and *Fauna Europaea*. Ole has always kept his close connections with the Scandinavian and especially Danish amateur community, and a number of his publications and activities have been directed at the amateurs and increasing the awareness of particularly microlepidoptera. ■



Figure 3. New SEL Honorary member Ole Karsholt being handed over the certificate by SEL President Erik van Nieuwerkerken.