

Obituary for Dr. Martin Krüger (16 October 1964 – 24 July 2019)

by Hermann Staude



Figure 1. Martin Krüger

It is very sad to inform you of the passing away of our dear friend and colleague Martin Krüger (Figs 1, 2).

Martin was a member of the scientific board of the Forum Herbulot initiative from the very beginning and has “been fostering and warranting only the highest scientific standards for the whole community of geometridologists” as aptly put by Axel Hausmann as read at Martin’s memorial service.

Martin has been the curator of the Lepidoptera section of the Ditsong Museum of Natural History, Pretoria, South Africa for 29 years and was for long periods serving as acting director of the museum. He was probably the most productive taxonomist ever working on this important collection and produced many revisionary papers culminating in the description of over 500 new Lepidoptera taxa.

Most of his work was on Geometridae and he managed to create a stable taxonomic platform for several difficult, previously poorly studied, groups in a southern African context. This work created the opportunity for the advancement of further ecological and conservation work on southern African Geometridae, making the family today a prominent target group for highlighting the conservation needs of Lepidoptera in South Africa. His major works in this regard are the revision of the Afrotropical Macariini and his many revisions in the mostly South African endemic ‘*Drepanogynis* group of genera’.

Martin also worked on other Lepidoptera taxa amongst which is a revision of the genus *Bomby-*

copsis (Lasiocampidae), which he produced with his friend the late John Joannou, describing 68 new species.

During the last decade, for a number of years, Martin took on the challenge and was completely occupied in attempting to create order in the taxonomically extremely complex Lithosiini (Erebidae: Arctiinae) of the Afrotropical Region. This resulted in the production of what was probably his magnum opus, The ‘Generic classification of Afrotropical footman moths *sensu stricto*’, a 176-page monograph in which he recognised 98 genera, described 60 new genera as well as the type species of 25 of these new genera, thereby creating as with his other works a stable platform for future study.

The preparation of a full obituary and a comprehensive list of his publications is underway and will be published at a later stage.

Martin was taken away from us prematurely and will be sorely missed by his family, friends and colleagues.



Figure 2. Martin Krüger at work in his collection in Pretoria, 24 January 2013 (Photo: Erik van Nieukerken).