

BUPRESTIS

A semi-annual newsletter devoted to the dissemination of information about buprestids and students of this group

Editor: Hans Mühle
Hofangerstr.22a
D-81735 München

Germany

Dear friends,

Very often the last months I thought of ending my work on buprestids. I am rather disappointed about the co-operation of some of you and about the actions of the ICZN and the treatment of the rules.

Many thanks to all who supported me with news and their papers. I cannot pass through the libraries to find out new papers to serve you by BUPRESTIS as complete as possible.

In my opinion it is not fair to let me do a work, which costs my time and money, which is not, as good as it could be because you are missing to send me your papers or citations. I do not like to work in vain. If you think that is easier or better to spread the news by yourself, please let me know

I said it already but I think I must repeat it again: We have so many things to do and for that it is absolutely necessary to cooperate instead of divide our community.

The new deadline for the next issue of BUPRESTIS will be 15. December 1999.

Hans Mühle
Editor

A. RESEARCH ACTIVITIES AND INTERESTS

Svata BÍLÝ wrote: I am currently working on a revision of American *Melanthaxia*, on a new concept of Anthaxiini and on larval morphology and taxonomy of all Buprestid larvae. Then I have some papers in press: A revision of the genus *Karenaxia*. New species of the genus *Palmar* from China. New genus of Anthaxiini from Africa (with C. L. BELLAMY), and: A revision of the genus *Brachelytrium* (with C. L. BELLAMY)

B. SPECIES WANTED FOR RESEARCH OR EXCHANGE

Chuck BELLAMY is starting to work on the Madagascar Coraebini; he likes to borrow any specimens available for study and description. He also lacks several significant lineages preserved in pure ethanol for DNS investigation: Aphanisticini and Cylindromorphini; while both groups occur here, he has not collected them yet, so European examples would be welcome. Thanks go to Svata BÍLÝ, Stephan GOTTWALD, Tomas MOORE, Mark HANLON, Mark GOLDING, Allen SUNDHOLM and Geoff WILLIAMS for collecting selected taxa for him for this future project.

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For his studies Svata BÍLÝ wants to get larvae of the following common European species:

Capnodis tenebricosa (larva in the roots of *Rumex*)

Coraebus rubi (larva in the roots and trunks of *Rubus*)

Agrilus laticornis (larva in the twigs of *Quercus*)

Dicerca aenea (larva in the trunks of *Populus*)

The best way how to preserve larvae is to kill and keep them in Kahle liquid or Pample liquid. The simplest way in the field is to kill larvae in boiling water (1-3 minutes) and than to keep them in 75% alcohol. Never kill the larvae in the alcohol - they are lost for morphological studies!

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Thierry LANDER sent the following lines: I am starting a revision of the genus *Chrysodema* L. & G., 1835. I need a lot of specimens because the species are so variable on coloration and punctuation. Each specimen is welcome

C. REQUESTS FOR LITERATURE

D. FORUM

Chuck BELLAMY sent me a short note that the meeting in South Africa is postponed until November 2000, due to the insufficient numbers of interested people.

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Collecting in Southeast Asia By Svata BÍLÝ

In October and November 1998 I again visited Ambon and Seram with two my friends and colleagues (Ole MEHL - Cerambycidae and Jan HORAK - Mordellidae). This time we hit the right place at the right time at the beginning of monsoon. We were a little disappointed by the changes at Seram. Within one and half year about 70000 people were moved from overpopulated Java to Seram and the coastal part of northern Seram has changed a lot: rice fields, logging companies, new villages etc. Now the true jungle starts about two kilometres inland unlike the last year when we found a virgin forest from the seashore as far as the tops of mountains (3000 m). Nevertheless having reached the untouched forest we were in the paradise. Except from Northern Thailand I have never seen so many Buprestids and Cerambycids in SE Asia. Within three weeks we collected over 60 species of Buprestidae and 200 of Cerambycidae. We wanted to reach also the tops of the mountains but at the elevation about 700 m we had to stop due to heavy rains and we were washed down back to the lowland. During this trip we had to admire our barefooted local porters who literally run through the jungle with 25 kg the whole day only with one short brake for a lunch (prepared at the place from the roots and fruits of the jungle). In this trip I saw for the first time in my life dark flocks of

Buprestids (*Belionota*, *Chrysobothris* and *Dicercomorpha*) starting from fallen logs like flies (and I also have not seen so fast beetles like *Belionota*).

At all places and villages we found very nice, kind and co-operative people. We were shocked when we saw in the TV three weeks later completely burned and ruined Ambon City with tens of killed people. The streets where we lived and where we spent nice time with nice people completely damaged and covered with ruins and dead bodies. There are things, which are out of my understanding!

In March and April I spent with my friend who is a photographer and nature-lover more than three weeks in New Caledonia. Although we were ensured by specialists that the March is the best time for xylophagous beetles in N.C. we found nearly insectless country. First, we were three or four months late and second, I have never seen such a destroyed country!

Large areas are quite damaged my chromium and nickel mines which have changed the country into something like moon surface. Repeated big fires damage the rest. Local tribes, the Kanaks, are pyromans and they like big fires so the island has been completely burned many times. Moreover their "national hobby" is also very dangerous. They like to mount empty bottles as high as possible on the branches of trees and the bottom of the bottle is a perfect lens for setting a fire! I estimate only about 5% of the island to be more or less untouched nature. These spots are all National Parks and here you can find really a paradise. These forests are composed mainly of ferns, Pandanus, Cupressaceae, Casuarinaceae, Proteaceae and Podocarpaceae; really very strange biocenoses, relicts from the tertiary or cretaceous periods!

I believe that in the right time these biotops must be more than interesting. We have found a lot of tunnels and rests of xylophagous beetles and also some Buprestid larvae (*Paracupta erythrocephala* and *Polycatesis* sp.).

By sweeping, beating, cutting and using a Honda generator we have found only three species of Buprestids, about five species of Cerambycids and several hundreds of small Tenebrionids, Helodids, Hydrophilids and Nitidulids. Moreover, New Caledonia belongs among the most expensive countries in the world! If you want to visit N. C. you must count with incredible prices. The cheapest way how to live and collect here is to rent a car immediately (surprisingly the only cheap service in N. C.) and to camp in the country (allowed everywhere except from Noumea). The camping facilities in the National Parks are perfect and usually free (not in the official camps at the seashore!). Accommodation and food is very expensive so we spent our trip in the tent and on tea, biscuits and Vietnamese noodle soups.

Proposed and cancelled meeting of Buprestologists in Pretoria.

I was very surprised and disappointed that only a few of us answered Chuck's offer. I can understand that some of us are not able or willing to travel to South Africa. But according to me it is unpolite not to answer. Everybody who has tried to organise anything like this knows how time-consuming it is. So many thanks to Chuck for his effort and I hope that next year we will be more co-operative.

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Addresses of yet unknown authors and address changes:

Francisco MOLINO-OLMEDO
La Zambra, 8
ESP-23100 Mancha Real, Jaén
SPAIN

Mark HANLON
mark.hanlon@ergon.com.au

Maureen DUANE
Duane@for.orst.edu

Thierry LANDER
til@firmenich.com

Dr. Göksel TOZLU
Dept. of Plant Protection
Faculty of Agriculture Atatürk University
25 240 Erzurum
TURKEY
Tel.: 0.442.218 41 20/2609
Fax: 0.442.218 36 47
e-mail: gtozlu@hotmail.com,
gtozlu@atauni.edu.tr

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