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In memoriam Hans-Georg Müller

(29. 5. 1957–29. 5. 2010)

Uncommon life stories have been a “label” for taxonomists for a long time, and occasionally, the ambivalent combination of outstanding talent, motivation and effort with Don Quixote-like fighting for material existence brings about a curriculum that fills us with awe.

Hans-Georg Müller was such a man who fought against imponderabilities, never got a permanent position as a taxonomist (we don’t understand why), never sought the pleasures of high-tech and “sexy” science (many of us understand this well), and often found fate to load a heavy burden on him.

A brief review of his *œuvre* shows us that Hans-Georg has nevertheless (or maybe thanks to all this) described far more than 200 new taxa, published 160 papers (see http://www.zsm.mwn.de/art/pub_mueller.htm), and worked on topics such as taxonomy, biogeography and ecology. His interest in animals covered the Pycnogonida, Amphipoda, Araneida, Opiliones, Hymenoptera, Decapoda and Isopoda. His main working areas were Europe (especially his home realms in Hessen), Colombia, and oceanic islands. He was an outstanding collector and traveller who went on quests for new species all over the world, which is, e.g., reflected by the high number of “*muelleri*” species dedicated to him by various colleagues. Hans-Georg was one of the

finest taxonomists in Germany. Zoology was not a job to him, but a mission.

The disease that he suffered from for years finally got to him on May, 29, his birthday, after long-lasting combats and periods of suffering. Until his last weeks, Hans-Georg kept sorting his numerous samples and looking through his collection for undescribed taxa, his legacy to taxonomists. And in a final step he completed his life as a zoologist: Together with Franz Krapp, his mentor, he published his doctoral thesis, which had been finished already in 1990, but available only as photo copies, in an international journal. For those who wish to have a look at Hans-Georg’s last paper and to dedicate to him a moment of reflection, we give the citation here:

Müller H.-G. & Krapp, F. 2009. The pycnogonid fauna (Pycnogonida, Arthropoda) of the Tayrona National Park and adjoining areas on the Caribbean coast of Colombia. *Zootaxa* 2319: 1-138.

We feel with Gertrud Müller, Hans-Georg’s wife, and his friends.

Roland Melzer, Stefan Friedrich, Enrico Schwabe
and the arthropod and mollusc workgroups
at the ZSM

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