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BUPRESTIS

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

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West Germany

And here, finally, you can see our crew, searching for buprestids and cerveza in Mexico:

From left to right: Ted **MacRae,** Rick **Westcott**, Hans **Mühle**, Chuck **Bellamy**, Byrd **Dozier**, Dave **Verity**, Kim **Pullen**, Gayle **Nelson**, Mark **Volkovith**, Svatopluk **Bily**

Dear friends,

Please excuse again that I did not answer your letters during the last months. And please excuse the long delay of our last issue of BUPRESTIS. I had been waiting for pictures to illustrate our Mexican adventure, but it didn't arrive in time. But at least it happenend. You will find a photo of our successful hunting and discussing connection on the bottom of this page.

You will read in this issue a lot of different opinions on our work and how to do it. I fully agree with Trevor **Hawkeswood** saying that papers on biology must have the same value as those on taxonomy. I also support Roman **Holynski** who is not willing to suffer the control by reviewers.
I can see that there are different groups of workers. It seems that one side is built by "professionals" the other by "amateurs". In order to divide us our work on buprestids, whether it is sheer hobby or work to earn money, should gather us . We do not have time enough to get lost in problems which do not lead to a better knowledge of buprestids. But, as far as I know, we are still in a better situation in our work than its in other families, where workers let not know one from each other. I know that some of us feel in the same way, alas! We are discussing, cooperating and in the end publishing. Like rain discussion can be fertile or it can be a pest. I don't think that we want to harm the other when we are frankly saying what upsets us. We really must not see all things in the same way. We are working on biology. This includes alternation, evolution and the same should be allowed for our brains too! I like it to work for this!
Sometimes you do have to start a fire-cracker to awake the sleepers!

For our next BUPRESTIS I expect your news until 15 june, 1993.

Best wishes

Hans Mühle
Editor

A. RESEARCH ACTIVITIES AND INTERESTS

Koyo **Akiyama** is working, together with Sadahiro **Ohmomo** on the revision of *Lampetis* from India and Indochina, and he has finished, also in cooperation with Sadahiro **Ohmomo** 3 small papers on *Ovalisia* from the Philippines, *Polyctesis* from Thailand and a new subspecies of *Megaloxantha* from Mindoro Isl., Philippines.

Svata **Bily** continues the revision of the North American *Anthaxia*, a rather time-consuming and long-term work. He just started with the revision of *Anthaxia proteus*-species-group and a paper with the description of a new genus near *Philanthaxia* from Thailand. In the future he would like to describe a new genus near *Semenoviella* from Vietnam.

Patrick **Bleuzen** continues his monography of the *Actenodini*. But there are problems to publish it, because its a paper of great volume and because the taxons should be represented by colour pictures. He has still finished a paper on a new *Chrysobothris* from French Guyana and one on the discovery of the male of *Agelia durantoni*. He continues the revision of *Colobogaster* and prepares a paper on the distribution and systematic of *Euchroma*.

Shigeru **Endo** is studying the distribution and ecology of the *Buprestidae* from the Indian and the Pacific Ocean and their neighborhood, especially from South-East Asia. He wants to publish a picture book of *Buprestidae* of South-East Asia in the future and for this he asks for as many as possible species for a comparative collection of buprestids of the world. He is also interested in any other information on the buprestids from South-East Asia.

Maurizio **Gigli** is working on *Polyctesis* and *Chalcophoropsis*. He would like to get any kind of publications and/or specimens of these genera and closely related species (literature after 1979 for *Polctesis* and after 1927 for *Chalcophoropsis*). He can buy or exchange with other literature and a large selection of *Buprestidae*.

Roman **Holynski** is doing the final preparation of the "Review of Oriental *Buprestidae* I and II", a review of generic - subgeneric classification of the subtribe *Chrysochroina*; further reviews of *Cyphogastra*, *Chrysodema* and *Endelus*. He is working on New Guinean *Habroloma* (and the remaining New Guinean *Buprestidae* of his journey in 1988); on keys to the identification of Polish insects - *Buprestidae*; Fauna of Hungary - *Buprestidae*; and the taxonomic relation within the *Julodis whithilli - euphratica* complex. Most of these projects are already begun since years, but unfortunately his situation does not allow to work "on schedule".

Eduard **Jendek** continues the revision of the genus *Agrilus* from the Far East and Oriental Region. He has numerous species of these regions and he has seen the *Agrilus* types stored in the museums of Paris, London, Prague, Basel, Budapest, Eberswalde, Vienna and in **Baudon**'s private collection. Many species in his collection are compared with those types. After having completed the catalogue of the species and having reviewed the rest of types (mainly from St.Petersburg, Moscow, Tokyo and Washington) he would like to start revision of groups within genus *Agrilus*. Now he is able to determinate many species from Far East and Oriental Region and any material for determination or exchange is welcome.

Takaharu **Hattori** is working on descriptions of new species of genus *Ovalisia*, another paper deals with the variability of *Buprestis mirabilis*.

Mark **Volkovitsh**: As soon as possible I intend to continue the descriptions of many new species of Palearctic *Acmaeoderini* (from Central Asia, China, Turkey, North Africa) and the larvae of *Melobasis, Cyphogastra, Prospheres, Paratassa, Galbella, Tyndaris, Polycesta, Xenorhipis* and *Dismorpha*. I hope to finish my work on antennal sensillae too. I beg pardon my collegues who are awaiting already since long time my determinations/ descriptions/ loaned or exchanged specimens. Besides being occupied by a lot of other work to earn money for our institue (e.g.: several biocontrol projects) there are troubles with postal mailing in Russia and I prefer to wait for an opportunity to send the parcels or letters by foreign collegues visiting our institute.

B. SPECIES WANTED FOR RESEARCH OR EXCHANGE

Patrick **Bleuzen** searches for his monograpg of the *Actenodini* males of the new world species: *aphrodite, auronotatus, jamaicensis, brasiliensis, garleppi, goryi, hermes, humeralis humeralis, nathani, metallicus, minutus, reichei, signatus mexicanus, venus* and additional males of one new species. Actually there are 71 species known in this faune and there will be 24 new species.

Rick **Westcott** writes: I am revising the genus *Agaeocera*. Please send me the label data for each species in your collection, but only if from Mexico or from the U.S. other than Arizona, New Mexico or Texas. If it is easier for you, just mail your specimens.

C. REQUESTS FOR LITERATURE

Savta **Bily** wants to sell a complete set of *Reitter: Fauna Germanica - Käfer*. All five volumes are in good condition.

Shigeru **Endo** wants to exchange his publications for yours. If you don't need his papers he is also willing to pay.

D. FORUM

Chuck **Bellamy** has great plans which we should support. He writes:

1. I have started to prepare an update to the 1985 Catalogue of the Higher Taxa ... and would invite any and all criticisms and corrections and additions. Many of the corrections have been noted and fixed and many additions are already in place. I am aware of several large works which are nearing completition that I would like to include, so it will be probably another year before I plan to complete this new effort. If you are planning to describe or have recently described any taxon from subgenus to subfamily, I would appreciate receiving a copy of your paper for inclusion. Please also give me yours thoughts about whether I should include type species information.
2. I have begun a joint authorship work with my long time friend and scarab collecting colleague Dr.Art **Evans** on a large format book on beetles, preferably many different types of beetles and many different families. I have a large number of slides of buprestids and other beetles from my collecting trips, but could use many others. If you have photos of large, spectacular beetles from various parts of the world, pictures of rare or endangered species, pictures of beetles doing various things, i.e. feeding, flying, mating, etc. or have local contacts or friends who might be photographers, I would be happy to hear from you. I'm not certain how much the one time use of the slides will be worth to the publisher, but I promise you that I will not use your slides exclusively for my gain. If there is money to be paid to me for the photos, then I will make certain that you are paid for the use of any that you might consider sending to me.
3. On a similar note, perhaps it would be good time to suggest that we compile a list of buprestid species that have been photographed by us collectively. Many of us would probably be interested in exchanging slides of our buprestid pictures as much as we would like to exchange the beetles. I would be happy to contribute a list of species that I have photographs of both natural pictures as well as photos of types.

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Svata **Bily** sent the following lines: The meeting in Mexico this year was very successful and useful. Chuck **Bellamy** has suggested the next place in South Africa which is not so expensive as French Guyana. We ought to think it over for 1994 or 1995, I guess. There is nothing like a personal communication!

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There is only very little interest in a meeting in French Guyana. So Patrick **Bleuzen** does not any longer continue to promote this plan for 1993. Perhaps it might happen another year later.

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After having retired Byrd **Dozier** moved to Florida wher he hopes to continue his work on buprestids. He has incorporated his personal collection into the Florida state collection and plans to continue to build that collection into one of the better research collections.
All donations or exchanges with European collectors would be appreciated.

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Eduard **Jendek** wants to start a discussion about our experiences with using databases. It would be good to try to determine some global standards for our work to enable future logical compatibility. It is concerning for example about following problems:

- Database of species
- software properability and compatibility
- logical structure of database
- using of abbreviations (e.g. literature and authors citations)
- determination of species distribution (use of political, zoogeographical, quadrate or other dividing)

I think that many of us could contribute with their experience to this discussion.

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Trevor **Hawkeswood** did not like what was written about his comments in one of the last issues of BUPRESTIS. He answers to this:
As far as I am concerned my last comments in the July 1991 were NOT a rebuttal of **Bellamy**'s comments. All I was saying is that the long delays sometimes with publishing have led to papers being out of date when they finally appear. I do observe that certain authors are able to get things published faster than others because for some reason they are regarded more highly than others. For instance, if you do research on taxonomy the papers are always accepted, but for some reason, certain buprestid reviewers try their best to stop the publication of biological observations, which I think are just as important.

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Roman **Holynski** sent a long, long letter with a lot of very interesting details which should be thought over and discussed seriously.

Firts of all he proposes to add the adresses of those authors, which are not on the BUPRESTIS mailing list. It would be very helpfull - especially for those, living far from major libraries - because of reprint-requests.

(Answer of the publisher: O.K., accepted, I will do my best and add the adresses if ever I know them!)

Then he continues:
Rick Westcott (BUPRESTIS 22) writes about "New Buprestis": "*4) Authors to be responsable for content; however they need to have their manuscript reviewed by at least one collegue*". This seems to me a typical example of what Hungarians call "wooden ironring". What if the opinion of the collegue differs from that of the author? Who is then "responsable for the content"? If it is indeed the author (as it obviously should be), then his opinion is conclusive whatever the reviewer thinks about it - in this case, what is gained with the obligatory review (except loss of time)? If, however, the author must follow the "advices" of the reviewer, then the reviewer - not the author - is responsable! I fully agree "that we should not be a fully refereed journal", but not only because "that adds too much time to publication", but mainly because I generally disagree with the currently so widespread "referee-mania".
I study a problem for years, spent weeks or months on formulating and writing the paper, then further weeks on "filing" it, putting each sentence, each word, each point and comma to the optimal place; then my manuscript is sent to a referee, who has usually met the particular problem for the first time in his life, read it at supper, "thought over" under shower next morning, and expressed his wise opinion with which I must comply or ... have my paper rejected! I take this for absurd! I am also against allowing the editor(s) to "make minor changes ... at their discretion": I have already two papers (one on historical zoogeography of Africa, and one - coauthored with my wife - on Cladocera), which I do not show to anybody, and feel ashamed for their existance, because after some "minor changes" (displacement of parentheses, removal of comma, etc.) made by editors, the readers find that Roman Holynski (after all, I am the author "responsable for content" ...) asserts e.g. that Gondwana broke up into Pangaea and Thetys, or that Schater (1858) quoted Wallace (1876)! In my opinion, editors can only **propose** changes (no matter "major" or "minor" ones), while the author should have the right (and opportunity) to accept or refuse them!

Chuck **Bellamy** (BUPRESTIS 23) proposes "a formal petition to the ICZN panel" to stabilize spelling of *Coroebus/Coraebus* and similar (derived) names. I cannot see, what is gained by making everything stabilized, standarized, uniformized? According to the code (Art.58) "species-group names ... that differ in spelling only in any of the following aspects (among others:"(1) use of ae, oe or e ...") ... are cleaned to homonyms ... ".
I would rather make the formal petition to ICZN for extending this provision to genus-group names: it would not only spare plenty of time "needed" to establish which form has the priority (or is linguistically a little bit more proper - all of them are roughly correct), but would help to avoid misunderstandings which issue from simultaneous functioning of practically identical names as formally valid names of different genera.

And, at least, a comment on the very old (BUPRESTIS 13) voice by **Barr**, **Bellamy**, **Dozier** et al. who "state their continuing disapproval of the practice of holytype retention in private collections" because "type specimens are property of science and thus, should be accessible to all". I would probably support their "disapproval", if museum curators are as aware of "type specimens being the property of science", as most private collection owners are ..., however, it is by far not so!
If I ask Svata **Bily** for loan of specimens from his private collection, the answer is invanably "samozrejmé" (=of course!); if I ask him of the same concerning the collection of the Prague Museum, the possibilities are so restricted by the museums authorities that in practice even the

loan of "normal" (not type-) specimens is difficult! And this is in Prague where my friend is the curator of beetles! - from institutions where I have no personal contacts, the situation is usually hopeless. Their collections are practically available for study only to those working in big museums and universities; if I ask for some material, the answer is plain: "we do not loan material to private persons!" And this concerns even undeterminated material, not only types! E.g. the British Museum has collected a big material from Celebes (Wallacea Expedition), there are surely very interesting Buprestidae also, and it would be very important for my studies to examine them, but for me they are simply non-existant! Well, one can say, I could go to London and study the material there. But

1) one cannot go personally to see any material needed for his study - otherwise he should spend his life in travelling;
2) for private scientists - having no institutional support - it is impossible (even in U.S.A. I think!) simply from the finacial point of view (the more so that, as I have been told, to work on the British Museum one must pay 26 - according to one source of information - or even 50 £ - according to another - a day; if this is true - I asked this in a letter to the BM, but they appearently did not find me worthy of an answer... - then I wonder what the term "publicly accessible" means in this case?; and finally
3) in this respect, there is no advantage of "public" collections: you can as well come to Szarvas to study my private collection (in fact, even in this case my collection offers better conditions than that of the BM or other "public" ones: you would be my guest, have free accomodation and meals, can work whenever you wish (no "office-hours"), etc.)!

But there is an "ethical aspect" of the question, too! I do all my scientific work on my own cost: no public institution ever offered me slightest support or help; as I already mentioned, I cannot even borrow material to study or needed paper from "publicly available " library ... . I spend as an average some 20 -30 % (sometimes, e.g.sending reprints to fellow-buprestologists, up to 50 %) of my monthly income (which amounts to the equvalent of ca.90 US $, while the prices in this country are already not much different from those in the West) for my entomological activity and developing my collection as the basis of this activity. Well, I have some boxes and pins, I send exchange material, reprints of my papers, and requests for reprints of my collegues, I visit libraries, I have been to Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Ceylon, Siam, Malaysia, Indonesia, New Guinea, I have built a nice (ca.3700 species) buprestid collection, but I have achieved this at the "price" of practically all my life: I spent most of my younger (up to ca.40) years in never heated rooms, working frequently at 0° C or below (even now I write this letter at 14° C, because heating is expensive); I earned money for my Siamese (1981) expedition in London, working as a porter in hotel, walking 17 km a day between the hotel, the British Museum and my room, and - after paying 9 £ a week for the room - I had 2 £ a week for all the other (practically for food: nothing else was "attainable"); I lived so during 5 months - please try it for 5 days only ... ; and I have one pair of shoes and one overcoat in the condition, which most of you have probably never seen, because you would have thrown them to rubbish several years ago; my wife washes "by hands" because we do not have a washing-machine; etc., etc., etc. But I do my entomological work, and I have the collection ... .

And now, according to the suggestion of **Barr** et al. (and unfortunately, not only theirs: similar proposal is being disputed in ICZN; deposition of type material in museums is demanded by some journals, etc.), I should give the most valuable specimens from my so dearly paid collection to an institution, which never gave me anything, which never supported me in any way - indeed, which does not allow me to borrow material for study

from its - built and kept also from my (as a tax-payer) money - collection or library! What moral right has anybody to demand it of me? I am fully aware that scientific material is the property of science, not of individuals or institutions, but just therfore. I am against obligatory deposition in museums: until a specimen (type or not) is in my collection, it is available to anybody (or at least to all students of Buprestidae), but it ceases to be available to all, when deposited in "public" institutions, because institutions almost invariably consider their collections their own (and not the science's) property!

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Hans **Mühle** and Patrick **Bleuzen** had been together in the beginning of Dezember in Paris and in January in Pfaffenhofen. We discussed a lot of "buprestology" and we want to ask you for your opinion on the following question:
Taxonomy lives of the description of the outer morpholgy of animals or plants. We are using to describe a genus, tribe, species or subspecies various characters and different ways. The same character can be of high value and importance in one "group" in the other its value is doubtful to non-existant. It is, for example, not quite clear why the shape of the pronotum (or colour of antennae) can be used in one case to separate genera, on the other hand this character is insufficiant to specify subspecies. Don't cry now, I know quite well the principles of evolution and phyllogeny, but this should not stop us to try to find a common sense to regard things. What do you think about finding important charcters for the different levels of the systems, in our case for the buprestids.

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In addition Hans **Mühle** wants to underline most of **Holynski**'s words: I also do not agree that it will be obligatory to deposite type material in public collections. As private collector and "amateur-scientologist" I know quite well all the problems mentioned by **Holynski**. Its not that we don't want to give "our beetles", its because there is evidently a great difference between "public" and "liberal" that there is no equality in the treatment of the material and workers. But in order to avoid that collections will be thrown away or otherways destroyed by ignorant heirs after death, the material should be dedicated to a museum or a collegue which could continue the work. Nearly each of us started with empty boxes and must have built up a comparative collection for his own. It needed a lot of time and money until he has had material (beetles and literature) and knowledge enough to start working. Normaly half of his life is still over at this moment. And now he should be obliged to give the fruits of his work to a so-called public institution?? He normally wants to continue his work, how to do that when he must loan his former own material each time from the museum? The curator of the museum does not work with the material! What's wrong in conserving the material in our own collection as long as we need it? Well, there are bad experiences, but on each side. Both, private or public "owners"can handicap our work by not loaning material or simply not answering letters.
This leads me to another point I wanted to tell you already since long time.
I think that we often waste time in discussing problems which are not really ones. To dig for the "right" name is lost time. **Leraut**'s paper e.g. caused a lot of confusion and costed a lot of time to stabilize the system again. We should not only think of ourselves. For us it is very easy to learn some new names, but the curator of a big museum's collection cannot follow all the changements throughout the system in order to know what is meant when one asks for Poecilonota (is it Poecilonota or Scintillatrix) specimens. First of all the names are tools

to be sure that all of us understand the same species. To change names there must be good reasons and these must be explained within a revision at least of the species group. It cannot be accepted any longer simply to say that the name used until today is synonym because there is an older name (normally not used for some decades and unknown to most of the scientists). In order to fight for formalizm we should try to widen our knowledge on the buprestids within our short period we can work.

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Magnus **Peterson** wrote a letter, sitting in the middle of a hailstorm, 130 ENE of Laverton, next to the "Great Victoria Desert". He is working there on reptile ecology. He had been working there for more than 4 months and he had not been able to contact any collegues or correspondents because he had been previously not near any towns or post offices. So he wants to apologise himself to the readers of BUPRESTIS, he will contact you after his return to Perth in late December 1992.
Australian deserts fall within the rainfall definition of a desert anywhere in the world, but are unique in having much greater proportions of vegetation than many other deserts. The vast majority of Australian deserts are covered in red sand and porcupine grass (*Triodia* spp.) giving them the appearence of savannah grassland. The aerea I am in is one of the richest in the world for reptile diversity. However, the vast Australian deserts are not generally well endowed with buprestid species, except in their edges. Their great uniformity means that only small numbers of species occur in their centres. So far I have observed 1 species of *Temognatha*, 1 species of *Paracephala*, 1 species of *Astraeus*, 1 species of *Cisseis*, 1 species of *Anilara* and 4 species of *Castiarina* in the country I am working in. Two of these nine species may be new to science. Apart from these buprestids, Australian deserts are particularly rich in ground-dwelling apterous insects such as beetles from the families *Carabidae*, *Curculionidae* and *Tenebrionidae*; wasps from the family *Mutillidae*; grasshoppers from the families *Pyrgomorphidae* and *Eumasticidae*, as well as innumerable species of ants. The latter hamper me substantially with the reptile work, since they obviously have been known to kill and dismember lizards and snakes in hours/minutes. We have had and exceptionally wet year in Western Australia this year, and consequently flowering in the desert has been exceptional, with many different genera of plants flowering in profusion. The birdlife has also been abundant with many species of parrots breeding in dead tree limbs around my campsite. Occasionally camels (introduced by Afghans) are heard bellowing nearby in the read sandridges/dunes surrounding me. Australian deserts are probably of great antiquity, because of the many specialized plants and animals that occur in them, but the vast majority of speciation has occured in them since the Miocene period. This reptile work I am doing is ongoing over a three-year period, and I will be here again next year. I hope to return to my buprestid studies in January 1993. By the way, I am out here by myself, and if any BUPRESTIS readers wish to visit me, they are welcome. Well, that's all for now. Hope the research goes well for everyone.

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Mark **Volkovitsh** wrote: First of all I want to thank Rick **Westcott** and Chuck **Bellamy** for organizing our trip to Mexico. After having labelled the caught buprestids I can say that this trip has been successful. I have collected more than 450 specimens belonging to above then 55 species from 19 genera. They are: *Tyndaris* (+ larvae!), *Polycesta* (+ larvae!), *Acmaeodera* (+ larvae), *Thrincopyge* (+ larvae), *Mastogenius*, *Euchroma*, *Agaeocera*, *Ditriaena*, *Buprestis*, *Agrilaxia*, *Tetragonoschema*, *Xenorhipis* (+ larvae!), *Chrysobothris* (+ larvae), *Tripantius*, *Dismorpha* (+ larvae!),

Agrilus, *Brachys*, *Taphrocerus*, as well as one or two undeterminated genera.
I have had no news from **Alexeev** and **Zykov** for a long time. Mark **Kalashian** is calling me sometimes. Political and economical situation in Armenia is very difficult. It is a complete isolation from Russia because of the expanding civil war in Caucasus. I am afraid that this winter will be very difficult for the Armenians. Mark asked me to tell you to correspond via my adress with him.

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Some of you moved and didn't inform me about their new adress. So the last issue came back. Perhaps you know where they went to. It is:

Gordon C. Snelling 329 1/2 W. Palm Ave. Monrovia, CA 91016 **U.S.A.**	Dr. J. F. Vayssieres B. P. 2229 Nouakchott **MAURETANIA**

No notes from **Toyama** and **Moore**! ! !

Adress of yet unknown author:

S.Markalas
University of Thessaloniki
School of Forestry and Natural
Environment
Laboratory of Forest Protection
P.O.Box 228
GR-540 06 Thessaloniki
GREECE

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E. PUBLICATIONS

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