

ICHNEWS

A newsletter for students of the Ichneumonidae (Hymenoptera)

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EDITORIAL

In the year that has passed since Ichnews 3 appeared we have received little support from you. We need to have more items for inclusion. Much has been happening in the last 12 months. A large number of papers have been published, including an exceptional number of major revisionary and reference works. The work we do in preparing the bibliography and directory must be balanced by notes, news and views sent in by you.

CURRENT NEWS AND NOTES

J-F. Aubert has completed his catalogue of the Western Palaearctic Banchinae. This work will be published in the near future and an appendix will include keys to the species of European Glypta and Lissonota.

Gerd Heinrich has completed three works, the Eastern Palaearctic Ichneumoninae, the Burmese Ichneumoninae part XI and the Ichneumoninae of Florida and the neighbouring Austroriparian zone. These works will be in Russian, German and English respectively and should be appearing in the near future.

Mattias Idar has completed a revision of the European Hadrodactylus which should be appearing soon. Mattias also informs us that there is a list of specimens in the Thunberg collection compiled by Lars Hedström. Further information is available through Mattias.

John Short's monograph on Ichneumonid larvae will be appearing any day now. It is being published by the American Entomological Institute. John is now starting a revision of the Australian Mesochorinae.

Mike Fitton recently visited Sweden in connection with the Linnaean bi-centenary celebrations. Mike read a paper about the scientific importance of the Linnaean insect collection. He plans to return to Sweden later this summer to study the Thomson collection.

Ian Gauld's revision of African Ophioninae is in proof stage and will appear later this year. It is being published by the Commonwealth Agricultural Bureaux as the first in a new series of taxonomic monographs.

REQUESTS FOR MATERIAL, INFORMATION ETC.

Mattias Idar is interested to see any material of Synomelix, Synodites and Pantorhaestes from Europe. In return Mattias would be glad to lend specimens for revisionary purposes from his own collection. The subfamilies Campopleginae, Mesochorinae and Microleptinae are the best represented (besides of course the Ctenopelmatinae!)

Ian Gauld would like any information about the location of collections of Ophioninae from S.E. Asia, particularly from the 'Indo-China' peninsula and eastern Indonesia. Ian would be pleased to try to determine specimens of Ophioninae from the Indo-Australian region.

STYLES OF SPECIES DESCRIPTIONS

by M.E.M. Idar

Inspired by some editorial objections against my own lengthy species descriptions, I would like to have a discussion in Ichnews about this matter. Here are some questions to start with -

How complete should a description of a new species be?

Should it include characters of less diagnostic value, with regard to the known related species because of too strong variability or because they look the same in this character?

Should a description be based on one specimen, a fixed set of specimens or all the available material of what the author thinks is one species?

Would it be advisable to make a brief description to validate the name by fulfilling the criteria of "effective publication" and, for example circulate stencilled copies of a fuller description to one's colleagues?

What need is there for redescriptions?

(Please send us your views on the points Mattias has raised. We will attempt to include a cross section of opinions in future issues. Eds.)

A NEW CHARACTER IN THE HINDWING OF ICHNEUMONIDAE

by P.M. Sanborne

While studying Sinophorus I noticed some large bristles in the mediellan cell of the hindwing. They tend to be larger and structurally different from normal wing setae. In addition to these there are often 2-4 similar bristles on the mediellan vein. These bristles are unfortunately difficult to see unless a slide is prepared of the hind wing.

I have looked for the character in other subfamilies (except Adelognathinae, Agriotypinae and Phrudinae) and found it present in all but the Ophioninae. The search was done primarily on a tribal basis on my own collection of Nearctic material. I found the character absent in some tribes; in others it was absent in some genera. Occasionally when I found it present in a genus it was absent in one or more species.

The bristles have a distinctive arrangement in the Cremastinae and Anomaloninae where they occupy positions on the subcostella on the portion nearest the point of attachment to the thorax rather than in the mediellan cell. Other subfamilies have a more or less uniform arrangement within the mediellan cell but there are differences in the number of bristles present and their spacing and position within the cell. It is possible that this character may be of some value in determining intergroup relationships but it should also prove to be of taxonomic use at generic level and below. It is my intention to look at this problem more closely. I would welcome suggestions and comments from readers.

DIRECTORY

Change of address

Shaw, M.R. Department of Zoology, University of Reading, Whiteknights, Reading, RG6 2AJ, ENGLAND.

Additions

Brussino, Gianfranco. Ministero Agricoltura e Foreste, Osservatorio malattie piante, Via S. Secondo, 39. 10128 Torino, ITALY.
(Biology of species parasitic on insects of economic importance; inflorescence visitings; Ichneumonidae of the Occidental Alpine arch).

Cederberg, Björn. Department of Entomology, University of Uppsala, Box 561, S-751 22 Uppsala, SWEDEN. (Western Palaearctic Ophioninae).

Chao, Hsiu-fu. College of Agriculture of Fukien, Fukien, PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA.

Oosterbroek, Pjotr. Instituut voor Taxonomische Zoölogie, Zoologisch Museum Universiteit van Amsterdam, Plantage Middenlaan 64, Amsterdam, THE NETHERLANDS. (Western Palaearctic Ophioninae).

Sanborne, P. Mike. Lakehead University, Thunder Bay, Ontario P7B 5E1, CANADA. (Nearctic Sinophorus; wing bristles of Ichneumons).

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