

CHALCID FORUM

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A Forum to Promote Communication
Among Chalcid Workers

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Euperilampus triangularis (Say)

EDITORS' NOTES

In the past four months your response to CHALCID FORUM No. 1 has been entirely positive. About one-third of you have returned the "general information" form from the first mailing, and we have received over 30 names to add to the list of chalcidoid workers. Many of you sent corrections for your addresses and we appreciate this help. It is not particularly easy to assemble some of this information, and to do it correctly is even more of a challenge! With this issue we will strive to achieve a 6 month mailing interval with January and June as the months of issuance. Therefore we solicit your input for an issue at least by 1 December or 1 May (and preferably earlier) for the issue to follow. Any information about traveling and collecting would be of great interest to us all, and reports on museums, long lost type specimens, and accumulations of material for study would be welcomed. In this respect we may occasionally borrow "information" of broad interest from other newsletters such as the well-received and fact-packed SPHECOS edited by Arnold Menke. You might even want to borrow from yourself and send us copies of progress reports, laboratory reports, trip reports, and the like which you have to write up for some administrator anyway.

Some suggestions were put forth concerning CHALCID FORUM, but we will continue in spite of them. We are breaking the "Etcetera" section up a bit to make things easier to find. We will have at least "Museum News" and "Collecting" sections when sufficient material warrants their inclusion. Obviously there is room for overlap so we will do the best we can.

MUSEUM and FAUNISTIC NEWS

The Biological Inventory News (Paraguay). -- The following information is taken verbatim from No. 4 (Feb. 1983) and should be of interest to us all:

"The National Biological Inventory is a long-term project aimed at the establishment of a National Museum of Natural History in Paraguay. The Museum, staffed and run by Paraguayans, will conduct biological investigations in Paraguay and provide information needed for environmental education, park planning, and wildlife

management programs. The project is administered by Paraguay's National Forest Service and includes the participation of the Peace Corps, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the Smithsonian Institution and the Missouri Botanical Garden. Funding for scholarships and supplies has been provided by the Missouri Botanical Garden, the Carnegie Museum, the World Wildlife Fund, and the U. S. Agency for International Development (US/AID). Since March 1980, scientists from USFWS have regularly visited Paraguay to conduct field studies and work with Paraguayan counterparts. A temporary museum has been established in the Forest Service Office, which serves as headquarters for the Biological Inventory. The temporary headquarters ... has recently acquired two herbarium cabinets for the rapidly growing botanical collection and 350 more glasstop jars for storage of liquid specimens. As for the future museum, a site has been selected and construction has begun. However, Paraguay's economic constraints make the completion date of the building poorly defined at present. The Biological Inventory News is designed to inform readers about the Biological Inventory of Paraguay. We welcome any questions, comments, or additions to our mailing list. Write to participants at Servicio Forestal Nacional, Tacuary 443, Edificio Patria, 60 Piso, Asuncion, Paraguay, South America."

Australian Biological Resources Study (ABRS). -- The Bureau of Flora and Fauna of ABRS has begun a newsletter entitled BIOLOGUE to keep readers up to date on ABRS happenings. We quote the following developments in Australian biology for your information:

"Two exciting developments have recently occurred in the Fauna Section - the launching of Volume 1 of the ZOOLOGICAL CATALOGUE OF AUSTRALIA ... and the recent announcement [of] the publication of the FAUNA OF AUSTRALIA.

For the uninitiated, the ZOOLOGICAL CATALOGUE OF AUSTRALIA, when fully compiled, will consist of a data base of information on every named animal species known to occur in Australia. Information for each species will include currently accepted synonymy, ... a brief summary of geographical distribution and ecological indicators and introductory references to literature on ecology, physiology, genetics, etc.

The data base has been established in such a way as to allow it to be easily updated. It will also be possible to search the data base by a series of key taxonomic, ecological and distribution terms. All vertebrate groups plus some invertebrate groups are presently being prepared for entry by taxonomists working in a range of Australian and overseas institutions.

A list of volumes planned and in preparation is available from the Bureau.

The FAUNA OF AUSTRALIA will consist of a series of ten 800 page volumes describing the Australian fauna to family level. The series is to be an authoritative overview of the Australian fauna that will be used by scientists, fauna authorities, students, and amateur naturalists. It will supply information needed for the study, survey, management and conservation of Australia's fauna."

For further information about these projects you might wish to contact the Bureau of Flora and Fauna, G. P. O. Box 1383, Canberra, A. C. T. 2601, Australia.

The Macleay Museum (Australia): -- Don Horning, Curator of Invertebrates at The Macleay Museum (The University of Sydney, NSW 2006, Australia), has written a lengthy history of this museum which was printed in SPHECOS No. 7 (p. 8-11). Readers are referred to that source for the complete article. We quote the following from a letter to Arnold Menke (editor of SPHECOS) which may be of interest to chalcidoid workers in particular:

"It is hard to say which authors have types of Hymenoptera represented until Hymenopterists study the collection. I do know that the following authors are represented: Dodd, R. Forsius, Froggatt, Girault, Klug, Leach and Westwood. Alexander Macleay purchased specimens from the Kirby and Donovan collections which are supposed to contain types. W. S. Macleay was a good friend of P. A. Latreille and he received many insects from Latreille. Specialists might be able to tell me if they are types (highly likely in some cases because of their close relationship - W. S. Macleay studied with Latreille for three years). Also we have Hymenoptera that may have come from the Thomas Say collection - labelled 'New Harmony, Indiana'. They may not be types but could serve as reliable neotypes."

Biological Control Institute, Fujian Agricultural College (People's Republic of China). -- This newly formed institute is co-sponsored by the Fujian Agricultural College and the central government of the PRC. Professor Chao Hsiu-fu is the chairman of the institute and writes to us as follows (see list of chalcidoid workers for address):

"I am glad to tell you that we will move into a new building in a short time. This building is especially built to accommodate the library, the laboratories of biological control and the insect collection of parasitic Hymenoptera. Also I am glad to tell you that I have been approved by our government to offer doctorate degree in systematic studies of parasitic Hymenoptera as well as in biological control of insect pests. Your list of literature on Chalcidoidea and the Chalcid Forum will help us greatly to build up our library.

Also I want to tell you that I am chief editor of a newly founded journal called "Wuyi Science Journal", the first issue of which appeared in 1981. This journal is primarily devoted for the publication of the studies on the fauna and flora and related fields of natural history studies of the Wuyishan Nature Reserve as well as other parts of our Fujian Province. It serves as a proceeding of the annual meeting of comprehensive natural history survey of the Wuyishan Nature Reserve, but will be published at irregular intervals. We want to use this journal and the quarterly Journal of Fujian Agricultural College to exchange with corresponding publications from abroad in order to enrich the collection of literature in the library of our Institute. Any help or suggestions or recommendations that you would offer to establish such exchange would be very much appreciated."

COLLECTING

Collecting Sites. -- A new publication is available entitled: "Long-term ecological research in the United States: a network of research sites, 1983." It lists 10 sites across the United States, their climates, existing data bases, facilities for lodging, and addresses. Copies are available free from: Long-Term Ecological Research Network, Division of Biology, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas 66506, U.S.A.

ETCETERA

Members in the News:

Gary Gibson. -- The following notice appeared in the Proceedings of the Entomological Society of Ontario, 1982 (vol 113:iv):

PRESIDENTS'S PRIZE -- 1982

This year the Entomological Society of Ontario met jointly with the Entomological Societies of Canada and America at Toronto, Ontario. For this occasion, students from the 3 Societies competed for a President's Prize in each of 8 categories. The winner in each category was selected by a panel of 3

judges, one representing each society. Each winner received a certificate and \$100.00. Congratulations go to the winners listed by category below:

Systematics, Morphology, and Evolution Gary Gibson, University of Alberta. Use of thoracic muscles as a character system for phylogenetic analysis of Hymenoptera

[Gary's coeditors congratulate him on a job well done!]

Mike Schauff. -- Mike served as co-organizer (with Scott Shaw) of the Hymenoptera Symposium at the annual meeting of the Entomological Society of America. [Mike's coeditors congratulate him on a job well done!]

Eric Grissell. -- Eric has done nothing of note. [Eric's coeditors congratulate him on a job well done ... as usual.]

International Society of Hymenopterists. -- The second meeting of the society was held at the Entomological Society of America meetings in Detroit. The society is alive and well and much of the meeting was devoted to organizational activities (e.g. a constitution, the upcoming election of new officers, dues, and so forth). It was decided that at present the society will not incorporate. A letter will be mailed early in 1984 to those who have expressed interest with a ballot for officers, information on dues and whatever else has come up. The idea of starting a journal has been put aside until the society is on its feet. If anyone is interested in the society, but has not been contacted they can write: Dr. Robert Wharton, Secretary, International Hymenopterists' Society, Department of Entomology, Texas A & M University, College Station, Texas 77843 U.S.A.

HELP!!

J. van den Assem. -- "Is there somebody in the eastern U.S. (New Jersey, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Delaware) who could provide me with living specimens of the genuine Melittobia chalybii Ashmead? (So far... different species [have been] sent under the name chalybii; chalybii seems to be a good species, to judge from museum material. I believe the type locality is Cape May, N.J.)".

M. Hayat. -- "Could anybody help me locate the type(s) of Coccobius flavidus (Zehntner, 1898. Med.vh. Proefst. West Java, No. 37:5-?)? A photocopy (or xerox) of Zehntner's paper is [a] welcome addition to my collection provided it is sent free!

Newsletter News. -- From J. Voegelé we received notice (and the premiere issue) of TRICHOGRAMMA NEWS which began production in April 1983. This promises to be an extremely valuable compilation of information! Detailed research reports are presented by nineteen workers from fifteen countries and a list of 40 workers is given with tabular information about what they are doing. Herewith is the introductory statement given for the new newsletter:

"During the first International Symposium on Trichogramma many expressed the wish to have a way of exchanging information on a regular basis. Further the information should not be limited only to those attending this conference and we therefore decided to start a rather informal newsletter with contributions on Trichogramma and other egg parasites. The response to an inquiry sheet sent to all Trichogramma workers known to us was overwhelming and the summarized information can be found on the following pages. We hope the newsletter will be of use to further stimulate international cooperation and thank all those who contributed to this issue."

We propose to quote from TN whenever material of general interest warrants it, and we hope TN will quote from us if they find material of interest. Those of you devoted to Trichogramma (poor devils) are probably on the mailing list already. But for those who

wish more information please contact: Dr. S. A. Hassan, Institute for Biological Pest Control of the Federal Biological Research Centre for Agriculture and Forestry, Heinrichstrasse 243 D-6100 Darmstadt, Federal Republic of Germany.

Suggestions:

J. T. Wiebes. -- "Years (decennia?) ago we had a list of specialists able and willing to identify insect material. Would it be a good idea to include such a list in CHALCID FORUM? As to my capacity: I am willing to identify any Old World Agaonidae, provided the material is well collected (samples should contain females and males; mentioning the identity of the fig host) and well preserved (in alcohol)." [Professor Wiebes has made a good point and one which we overlooked in preparing our "general information form." We should have included a section on willingness to identify material. We suggest that those willing and able to accept material for identification write up a note with the following information: group(s) accepted, geographical limits, preparation of material (e.g., alcohol, points, slides), and terms of acceptance (e.g., material kept in exchange for names). If you specify exactly what you can do, and what the terms will be, this will perhaps forestall some of the problems which are bound to arise. We will put this note in the Etcetera section or as a separate feature as the case warrants. Eds.]

T. C. Narendran. -- "I wish ... the editors could also give consideration for starting an International Chalcidology Research Journal (without too much page charges!!)." [It would be a wonderful and idealistic goal to have chalcidological papers appear in one publication. It does not seem likely to happen with us, anyway! Eds.]

Anthony Watsham. -- Rev. Watsham made a few comments on his information form concerning the state of the art of chalcid taxonomy and we repeat them here. Many of us agree with these ideas, at least in principal, and they should provide much enjoyable debate in future issues of the FORUM section! "Families of chalcids ... need a world-wide survey and someone who can make a good key. Needed [are] keys to genera - perhaps for regions, and revised every year. The genera seem to be more use than the families and give the type of host to be expected. The families [are] rather like a road junction, with no stopping, but give you the direction. It is not possible, it seems to give a definition of a pteromalid, but the genera do help - they are more like the family in other groups, e.g. woodpeckers."

Corrections. -- Numerous corrections have been made in the "List of Workers" section as well as some changes in addresses. Valentina Yasnosh has written concerning the correct spelling of her name. We thank her for this information and everyone should feel free to point out such mistakes as they occur. Perhaps we shall all eventually get to know each other better (and more correctly).

In issue 1, we reported that John Huber was looking for several types of Gonatocerus spp. and referred readers to the list of chalcidoid workers for John's address. Unfortunately, we then forgot to include John in the list. He has been added this time and is still looking for the types. Sorry about that!!!

Mymarid Memos. -- John Huber has recently compiled an excellent review of the history, current status, and future needs for the Mymaridae. He has passed along to us a list of those who are known to be currently engaged in mymarid research (if there are any more of you, please let John know). Addresses are in the mailing list, including John's.

- Dr. P. Fidalgo Revision of South American Acropolynema and related genera.
- Mr. G. Gibson Revision of Mymarommatidae (with C. Yoshimoto), relationships of mymarids and mymarommatids with other chalcids.
- Mr. J.T. Huber Revision of North American Gonatocerus.
- Mr. M.J. Mathews Revision of British Mymaridae.
- Dr. J. Noyes Revising New Zealand Mymaridae (with E. Valentine).
- Dr. M. Schauff Revision of Holarctic genera and North American Erythmelus species.
- Dr. B.R. Subba Rao Review of Australian Gonatocerus
- Dr. P. Sveum Revision of Scandanavian Mymaridae.
- Dr. H. Taguchi ? Revising various Japanese genera.
- Dr. E. Valentine Revision of New Zealand Mymaridae (with J. Noyes).
- Dr. G. Viggiani Revisions of some species of Palearctic Anaphes and Patasson.
- Dr. C. Yoshimoto Revision of Mymarommatidae (with G. Gibson) and revising New World Genera.

Masthead. -- The drawing for our masthead is by Jim Miller and appears as the frontispiece for D. Chris Darling's paper on New World Euperilampus (see Bibliography section). We thank Chris for loaning us this illustration. We urge others of you to submit artwork for this space, but it would be very helpful to us if you could send a photographic copy which is the correct size for the space. We do not always have the time to do this ourselves, and our results are not as good as you might like them. We have one or two drawings now, but we could always use a few more.

RESEARCH NEWS

About one-third of those who received CHALCID FORUM No. 1 returned the information form. The following information is drawn from those forms (verbatim sections are indicated by quotation marks). Eventually we will construct a complete mailing and research list. Please let's hear from the remaining two-thirds of you!

U. C. Abdurahiman: Dr. Abdurahiman writes that he is working on the "systematics, behaviour and bio-ecology of the fig-wasps of the families Agaonidae, Torymidae and Eurytomidae" as well as conducting "studies on the parasites and predators of Opisina arenosella (= Nephantis serinopa), the caterpillar pest of coconut. This includes detailed bio-ethological studies on the braconid, bethylid and elasmid parasites."

J. van dan Assem: The following are components of Dr. Assem's current research: "Comparative aspects of courtship behaviour of Chalcidoidea. Temporal aspects of motor patterns used in courtship, kind of stimuli produced, onset of female sexual receptivity, receptivity signals, periodic changes in courting male's tendency to copulate. Sex ratio and reproductive success, precise or probabalistic determination of sex of an offspring, variable host size and sex ratio, storage of information on size of hosts encountered previously and working of the memory system involved, experimental tests of mathematical models' predictions."

John Beardsley: Although John has published on Hawaiian Encyrtidae he admits that he is "not actively working on chalcids at present."

M. F. Claridge: Professor Claridge is working on "European species of Eurytomidae," "taxonomy and biology of Tetramesa species and their parasites," and "egg parasites of leafhoppers and planthoppers."

Paul DeBach: "I am now emeritus Professor, having retired June 1, 1983. I plan to continue active collaboration with David Rosen on Aphytis and Mike Rose ... on aphelinid parasites of whitefly."

L. DeSantis: Dr. DeSantis is currently working on projects involving egg parasites of heteropterous Hemiptera (including new genera and species of Encyrtidae), eulophid parasites (including Emersonella and a new genus) of various insects, and pteromalid egg parasites of the genus Erixestus. Of special interest to many of us will be his first supplement to "Catalogo de los himenopteros calcidoideos de America al Sur de los Estados Unidos" published in Rev. per. Entomol. 24:1-38. We all owe a debt of gratitude to a man who has single-handedly systematized the fauna of much of the New World.

Patricio Fidalgo: "I have finished my Doctoral Thesis which is a revision of the neotropical species of Acmopolynema, ... and three related genera (Mymaridae: Polynematini), which should be published later next year. I am currently revising the Argentine species of Doryclytus Foerster, and related genera. During the next years I hope to complete the revision of the Argentine genera of the Polynematini. I am also interested in other genera of Mymarinae."

Dan Gerling: Dan writes that his principal taxonomic interest lies with the Aphelinidae, especially the whitefly parasites. He is additionally interested in bio control, pest management, and behavior of solitary bees. His current research includes "behavior of carpenter bees, biology, behavior and non-chemical control of Sweet Potato whitefly (Bemisia tabaci)" and "acquisition, behavior and potential of B. tabaci parasitoids."

Christer Hansson: "At the moment I am in the late stages of a revision of the Palearctic species of Chrysocharis. When I have finished that revision I plan to continue with the Nearctic species of the same genus."

Mohammad Hayat: "I have three projects in progress: 1) a review of Coccobius (Phyiscus is a synonym) species mainly those described by Howard and Girault, 2) a revision of the Indian species of Encarsia, and 3) a catalogue of Oriental Trichogrammatidae (with Gennaro Viggiani). Future plans include a revision of Indian Aphelinidae and a catalogue of the world Aphelinidae!"

Karl-Johan Hedqvist: Dr. Hedqvist writes that he is presently working on world keys "to genera of Pteromalidae" and "genera and species of Euderinae." In addition he is working on "parts of chalcid flies in 'Fauna Entomologica Scandinavica.'" Additionally he reports that he has a private collection of "more than 100,000 specimens determined, 100,000 not determined, and 150,000 not mounted." Parasitic wasps in other groups include 5,000 determined Braconidae (25,000 undet.), 5,000 undetermined Ichneumonidae, and 10,000 undetermined Proctotrupoidea.

Lars Huggert: "My interest in the microhymns was instigated by the chalcids especially the pteromalids and I wrote a couple of papers on that subject. Later on my interest shifted more and more to the proctotrupoids as they were so very poorly studied. At present, I am currently working on the scelionid genus Idris s.l. in the E. Palearctic, Oriental and Ethiopian regions. Also, I am trying to do something on the diapiiid genus Trichopria s.l. in Africa - Europe. Besides these larger projects, some shorter papers are in the mill, but unfortunately nothing on chalcids, so far."

K. S. Lin: Dr. Lin writes that his groups of principal interest are the Trichogrammatidae, Mymaridae, Aphelinidae, etc." He currently has manuscripts in preparation on the "Genera of the superfamily Cynipoidea of Taiwan" and "A revision of genus Leptolamina (Eucoilidae)."

M. S. Mani: Dr. Mani is currently working on "taxonomy of Chalcidoidea (other than Encyrtidae)."

T. C. Narendran: "For the past several years I have been working on the Oriental chalcidids. During 1979-1980, I spent several months at the Department of Entomology, British Museum (Natural History), London doing collaborative research on chalcids with Dr. Z. Boucek of C.I.E., London. At present I am revising the various genera of Oriental Chalcididae. I hope to finish up this revision in the next two or three years. I am also interested in other families of Chalcidoidea. I also plan to study on a long term basis some of the other families of Oriental Chalcidoidea. A major research project on the biosystematics of Oriental Chalcididae will be started in the near future with financial grant under P.L. 480. This has been approved already by I.C.A.R."

Ian Naumann: "Recent and current chalcidoid work includes: (1) a revision of the Indo-Australian Smicromorphinae (Chalcididae), species of which are parasitic on the immatures of weaver ants (Oecophylla spp.); (2) a study of the Australian and S. W. Pacific Diparinae (Pteromalidae); and (3) a taxonomic and biological look at some Elasmus spp. associated with pink bollworm in north-western Australia. In the past 4-5 years I have collected widely in Australia: six trips to the tropical north (rich in Girault type localities); visits to the wet temperate regions of the SW and SE (including Tasmania); and a few forays into the arid regions of central Australia."

John Stuart Noyes: "I have just completed, with M. Hayat, a review of the Indo-Pacific (including Australia and New Zealand) genera of Encyrtidae. This is styled along the same lines as my (1980) review of the Neotropical genera of Encyrtidae [Which makes a fine slide projector stand as we understand. EDS.] and should be published around the middle of 1984. I am currently revising the New Zealand species and genera of Encyrtidae and have more or less completed, with Errol Valentine, a review of the New Zealand genera of Mymaridae and remaining chalcid families excluding the Pteromalidae and Eulophidae. My future projects include a revision of the world species of Cerchysiella (=Zeteticontus) and probably a revision of the Madagascar genera and species of Encyrtidae and the completion of a Royal Entomological Society handbook to the British Encyrtidae. My long term interest is with the relationships of the encyrtid genera and tribal classification of the family."

Jong Cheol Paik: "For the past several years, I have been working on the parasites of agricultural pests. At present, I am working on a Korean Eulophidae. I am also interested in chalcid flies in general."

Bernard Pintureau: "I'm currently interested by the enzymological characterization of the European Trichogramma species. At this time only three systems are analyzed and used to calculate interpopulation or inter near species genetic distances. Correlations between genetic distances and morphological distances will be investigated."

John D. Pinto: John is working on the "systematics of Trichogramma" and is "also building a collection of Trichogrammatidae - primarily North American fauna."

Alexander P. Rasnitsyn: Dr. Rasnitsyn writes that his interest lies in the "paleontology, phylogeny and taxonomy of Hymenoptera." He also states that he is "sorry but Chalcidoidea are only slightly touched."

Ren Hui: "I hope to develop the international introduction of natural enemies of insect pests and scientific exchanges, and to raise the research level in this field." He is currently working on the "identification and taxonomy of Chalcididae."

Tetsusaburo Tachikawa: Dr. Tachikawa is primarily interested in Encyrtidae, Aphelinidae, and Signiphoridae and studies of their behavior and use in biological control.

Errol Valentine: Errol writes that he is interested in the "general biological control of pests of horticulture and cropping." He is presently working on "a review of the chalcidoid genera of N. Z. (with John Noyes, British Museum)."

Gennaro Viggiani: Dr. Viggiani is working on the "taxonomy of Trichogrammatidae, Mymaridae and Aphelinidae" ... and "on the biosystematics of the genus Encarsia."

Jean Voegelé: Dr. Voegelé works with oophagous parasitoids and biological control. In the past he has worked with "scelionids and ooencyrtids in relation [to] pentatomid eggs." Currently he works with Trichogramma in three areas of study: "world revision and inventory (350 strains in permanent breeding), transfer to Trichogramma [of] what we have learned about Drosophila," and "building up strategies of biological control against the major pests in agriculture by understanding all parameters governing host-parasite relations."

Anthony Watsham: "I have worked on chalcids with the guidance of Dr. Z. Bouček since 1972. We decided that my most useful contribution would be to illustrate the genera. The first family chosen is the Pteromalidae of which I have about 75 genera. 40 paintings in watercolour have been completed and by next August (84) the rest should be finished. It is hoped that they will help the many workers in ecology etc. to recognise genera without the danger of getting lost in keys."

J. T. Wiebes: "Past, present and future research is aimed at a world-wide taxonomic revision of the Agaonidae in the first place and other chalcidoid fig insects (Torymidae, Pteromalidae) in the second. The ultimate goal is a phylogenetic classification of the groups concerned, to be compared with that of the other partner in the fig-wasp symbiosis, i.e., the plant genus Ficus. My general conclusion is that agaonid pollinators are strictly specific to their fig-host, but exceptions occur, which now have my special interest. Ecological research (mainly in Africa, under the auspices of the French CNRS) is being carried out in cooperation with the French biologist Georges Michaloud and with the Ficus-specialist C. C. Berg, who at present is my botanical counterpart in the comparative taxonomical study mentioned above."

Valentina A. Yasnosh: "For the past several years I have been working on the classification, evolution and phylogeny of the family Aphelinidae. On this basis recently I have published a revision of the aphelinid genera of the world. I am one of the authors of 'Key to insects of European part of the USSR (family Aphelinidae).' Currently I am working on a revision of Aphytis species of our fauna and also intend to make a review of aphelinids of Far East of the USSR. I also work toward the biological and integrated control of coccid and aleyrodid citrus pests."

M. D. Zerova: "My primary interest is in systematics of Chalcidoidea (Fam. Eurytomidae, Torymidae, Ormyridae) however I'm interested in systematics of all other Fam. of Chalcidoidea. Now I'm going to prepare a review of Fam. Eurytomidae of the Palearctic fauna."

TECHNIQUES and FORUM

G. A. P. Gibson

Much to my dismay and righteous indignation 'uncle' Eric, our esteemed editor in chief, informed me that since I was listed as coeditor I might consider doing some work for the

newsletter. I would have preferred to only consider it, but it appears that I will be responsible for two sections, 'Techniques' and 'Forum.' [Material for these sections may be sent directly to Gary or to CHALCID FORUM c/o Grissell or Schauff. Eds.]

FORUM

This section was outlined in the initial newsletter as "reserved for the thoughts and opinions of chalcid workers everywhere." I suppose that the first thing to determine is whether chalcidoid workers have any thoughts or are interested in those of others. This will be determined by your letters and submissions to this section. Write what you want about what you want, but remember that FORUM is intended primarily to stimulate thought and an exchange of ideas between chalcidologists.

To start things off I would like views on an issue of some concern to me. Should we as chalcidologists reject for publication any paper we get for review that offers only isolated species or generic descriptions without modifying existing keys or providing a new key to separate the taxa (not just how to distinguish aus from bus)? Should we reject any paper describing new higher taxa which does not discuss relationships? It is likely that 50% or more chalcidoid genera are monotypic. It is even more likely that the majority of these so called 'genera' represent no more than species which have some striking or unusual character, but are otherwise assignable to an existing genus. I will be synonymizing many such 'genera' in my revision of Eupelmidae. I would like your opinions on whether we as chalcidologists should review on content only, or police ourselves and set standards for publication of new taxa?

TECHNIQUES

This section was not mentioned in the first issue, but is self explanatory. All of us probably have a few tricks or shortcuts we use that make every day life as a chalcidologist easier. [For example, throwing away specimens that do not fit in our keys. EEG]. TECHNIQUES should become one of the more valuable sections of this newsletter if you are willing to share them. I promise (somewhat faithfully) to include in the next issue techniques for preparation of specimens for the scanning electron microscope (SEM). I will be most unhappy if this is the only submission available for the next issue.

For anyone who may have missed it, John Noyes recently published a comprehensive paper on techniques which should be required reading for any chalcidologist. This paper is of course, "Collecting and preserving chalcid wasps (Hymenoptera: Chalcidoidea)," Journal of Natural History, 16:315-334 (1982). I am sure that John would not be hurt if you wrote to the newsletter about improvements, modifications or the pros and cons of various techniques outlined, relative to the groups you work on or have experience with. Since I have suggested this I suppose it is only right that I should be the first to offer some comments.

First, as a soft North American I do not think much about putting my head into a net to "poot" specimens. At the risk of being immodest I bring to your attention a second paper, "The separation bag - a new device for collecting insects," published in Canadian Entomologist, 111:1197-1198 (1979), by Lubomir Masner and myself. The separation bag is essentially a portable "light box" sensu John. It not only makes collecting a much easier and more comfortable exercise, but will increase your catch many fold. Although the device illustrated can not be readily made by most, a simpler model incorporating the principle and using household materials should be possible with a little imagination. Once used you will never go into the field without it.

Secondly, in my investigations on evolutionary relationships of chalcidoids, I have been using internal characters such as muscle systems. I would thus

modify the comment by John (p. 324) that "under no account should chalcids ... be stored in alcohol if there is any possibility of it being stored dry." Alcohol preserved material is essential for study of internal systems. If a series of specimens is collected I would beg that part be preserved in alcohol in addition to dry mounting part. Using both methods provides suitably preserved material for more diverse procedures of study than by one method alone.

Finally, sternal and tarsal characters are important for recognition of eupelmids. I thus consider point mounting superior to card mounting, at least for eupelmids. I agree that card mounting is far superior for protecting the specimen, but the disadvantage is that it prevents viewing of a good portion of the specimen.

Okay, 'Forum' and 'Techniques' are born, lets hear from you to keep them alive.

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