Aquatic Oligochaeta
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Proceedings of the Third International Symposium on Aquatic Oligochaeta held in Hamburg, Germany September 29 – October 4, 1985

Edited by
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This volume is dedicated
to the memory of S. Hrabě
Preface

The Third International Symposium on Aquatic Oligochaeta was organized by Drs. O. Giere, M. Dzwillo, R. Grimm and colleagues. Over 50 scientists attended, and while the number of nationalities dropped from 17 to 12, we were pleased to welcome our first Chinese delegation.

At a brief business meeting, the invitation to attend the Fourth Symposium at Baton Rouge, Louisiana, U.S.A., hosted by Walter Harman in 1988 was approved. The meeting is scheduled to begin on March 15. An invitation to hold the meeting in the Soviet Union was presented for Tarmo Timm in his absence, and it was agreed unanimously that the 1991 meetings be held there, perhaps at Tallin on the Gulf of Finland. Christer Erséus has agreed to consider Göteborg, Sweden as an alternate for 1991 and as a positive invitation for 1994, so we are well prepared for the future.

Olav Giere has recently expressed opinions about publishing the proceedings of conferences that make it clear why he is not the editor of this volume. Michael Dzwillo was prevented from completing the task by pressure of other business, and so we undertook the task somewhat late. While we share much of Olav Giere's concern about such volumes, an honest attempt to review the papers does help to maintain quality, and both of us wish to thank contributors for their positive response to our often quite drastic re-writing of manuscripts. In order to assess the feelings of both attendees and the wider community of colleagues, a questionnaire was circulated (see p. 313). Of 163 sent out, 59 replies were received. Only 8 people were totally opposed to any sort of proceedings being published, and of the rest opinion was fairly evenly divided between the options of producing cheap, non-reviewed, all inclusive proceedings (16), formal refereed proceedings such as the present volume (20) and a volume including specially solicited review papers and papers submitted by authors encouraged to consider a wider than usual audience appeal (more than 30). The Proceedings of the first conference aimed at this third option. Future organizers might wish to consider the possibility of giving direction to the meeting by seeding such contributions into the programme, which would then widen the appeal to the resulting publication.

The editors would like to record their gratitude to the reviewers and to Mrs. M. Stone who re-typed nearly all the contributions to conform to style. They further wish to acknowledge financial support for the conference from Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft and Universität Hamburg, without whose help this meeting would not have been possible.

R. O. Brinkhurst
R. J. Diaz
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RNDr. Sergej Hrabě DrSc., Brno, C.S.S.R. (1899–1984) In Memoriam

Dr. S. Hrabě, Professor of General and Systematic Zoology, J. E. Purkyne University in Brno, died on March 29th 1984, at the age of 84. He was born in Moscow in 1899 and was educated in Moscow and in Prague, where he studied with Prof. A. Mrázek. On his appointment to Brno as assistant lecturer in 1927, he continued the study of aquatic oligochaetes that he began with his doctoral dissertation, continuing the long distinguished history of work in this field in his country begun by Dr. F. Vejdovsky. While as a teacher and researcher his interests were wide, it is his monumental contribution to aquatic oligochaete biology, and especially systematics, that we acknowledge here. His major contributions were in the systematics of the Lumbriculidae, Haplotaxidae and Tubificidae, and in the fauna of the U.S.S.R. The faunas of Lakes Aral, Onega, Teleckoe, Baikal, Issyk-Kul, the Volga River drainage and Estonia, the Ponto-Caspian area, the Caspian and Black Seas received special attention in studies that spanned 13 countries. He published over 80 papers, continuing well after his retirement in 1970.

I was privileged to be able to work with him for a brief period in Brno at a formative stage in my own career and know how interested he was in encouraging young people both then and through his continued correspondence directly with my students as well as myself. This brief memorial is extracted largely from the biography by Obr (1985), who lists all of the publications produced by Dr. S. Hrabě.

Ralph O. Brinkhurst.

Reference