

Opisthobranch Newsletter

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EDITOR'S NOTES

Pat LaFollette has surfaced in Austin, Texas and should be settling into a new job soon. We hope to continue with the project to put all of the back volumes of the Opisthobranch Newsletter onto CD-Rom.

During March, I spent many hours working on the bibliography only to become convinced that the large file with all subject and species information at the end is the best format. Now I'm back to the basics – entering information from the reprints that come my way. Please send species lists for any opisthobranch papers you can. If you have any digital species lists or subject lists, please send them to me as email attachments or send me floppy disks, zip disks or CD-Roms.

PERSONAL NOTES

From Kathe Jensen: The last year has been really bad - I have been unemployed most of the time (except for teaching marine biology summer courses), and the Danish social authorities are getting on my back - as I have not been able to find myself a job, they think I need to retrain as a computer technician or something like that - there is no future in marine biology! The Zoological Museum lost 3 positions this year (1 is the curator of Crustacea which will not be refilled), and most likely there will not be a replacement for the last mollusc curator who will retire next year. So the future looks very gloomy.

For the last 3 years I have been involved (unpaid!) in a Danish 3rd world aid programme (Tropical Marine Molluscs Programme), and I have participated in meetings in Indonesia and Thailand. Also, I have had an Indian chemical ecologist working here with me on opisthobranch anatomy (he needs to be able to put names on the animals he uses for chemical analysis). I hope to go to Vietnam in October this year for a meeting. Last year I became advisor for an Italian Ph.D.-student who works on Mediterranean sacoglossans feeding on *Caulerpa*, with special reference to the possibility of controlling the invasive *Caulerpa taxifolia*.

But again - except for travels, there is no money involved in this. In June I will be one of the "keynote speakers" at an opisthobranch meeting in Sicily, Italy. And, as usual, I will teach summer courses all of July - so no participation in AMU-meeting. - KRJensen@zmuc.ku.dk

Cynthia Trowbridge: spent a month in Australia (Jan./Feb. 1999), working on a CSIRO/CRIMP contract (Centre for Research on Introduced Marine Pests) and visiting colleagues. She had the opportunity to visit with several "branchers": Bill Rudman (Australian Museum), Rosalind Hinde (Univ. Sydney), and Sue Williams and Di Walker (Univ. Western Australia). She gave several seminars on the larval and feeding ecology of *Elysia viridis* on Scottish rocky shores and found many local ascoglossans (=sacoglossans) on the green macroalgal host *Codium fragile* (*Elysia maoria* and *Placida* cf. *dendritica*). The highlight of the trip was snorkeling for slugs at Rottneest with Sue and seeing the *Caulerpa*-feeding and *Codium*-feeding slugs. Cynthia returned to Oregon during the New Carissa oil spill incident that affected several of her long-term study sites. - trowbric@bcc.orst.edu

From Michael Miller 28 March 99: A group of us are heading to the Dumaguete area of the Philippines in April to personally see all the branches Erwin Köhler of Germany has been reporting on! Alan Grant and Jerry Allen are part of the group. The world will have some tropical slug videos soon, if Alan's equipment makes it there and back. - mdmiller@cts.com

From Gilianne Brodie: I am off to Sicily in June for the opisthobranch workshop. It should be great fun and a chance to "talk shop" with my overseas peers. In July I am planning a "winter" field trip to Lizard Island, Australia to collect opisthobranchs with Heike Wägele and Annette Klusmann-Kolb (from Germany). In the mean time I am teaching a new 3rd year undergraduate course on Molluscan Biology. It is going well and I am learning a great deal about molluscs besides opisthobranchs! - Gilianne.Brodie@jcu.edu.au

INFORMATION EXCHANGE

Question: Why does the ending of species names sometimes change? The example that comes to mind is *Stiliger fuscovittata* Lance 1962 that now seems to be *Stiliger fuscovittatus* Lance 1962? There are numerous others in the literature and I was wondering the reason(s) behind such changes. I know that this relates primarily to the gender of the name but can anyone provide more details. A second part of this question is why aren't parenthesis required around (Lance 1962) when there is a "change" at a later date?

From Karen Gowlett-Holmes: The answer is in the gender of the genus. The ending of the species name relates to the gender of the genus - the species name is an adjective, and its gender must match that of the genus.

Gender can be masculine, feminine or neuter. Most adjective endings are -us for masculine & neuter, and -a for feminine,

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but a few have -a for neuter (there are others, but I don't have my Latin texts here). In some cases, the gender of the genus may not be clear, or may not be known by the author. In these cases, a species name that was published as ending in -us may change to -a if it does not actually agree with the gender of the genus. These are changes that must be made according to the rules. The gender of a genus is not always easy to work out, particularly those derived from Greek, and mistakes have been made and sometimes widely used.

An example is the gastropod genus *Haliotis* - this is feminine, but for a long time, many of the species names were published in it with masculine or neuter endings - these all changed when someone realized, and caused a whole lot of changes, e.g. *Haliotis ruber* became *H. rubra*, and as many of the species are of major commercial importance and the names widely used by people with no knowledge as to why names sometimes change, this has caused a lot of confusion. When a genus name is first published, the author should state what the gender is - if in doubt, refer back to the original genus description, and then find out how the species name declines - what are its endings for the different genders. Neuter genera can be a real headache for new players, because you will get both -us and -a endings, and they are all valid! - karen.gowlett-holmes@marine.csiro.au

CURRENT EVENTS

You can find a summarized program of the International Workshop of Opisthobranchs that will be held next June (10th from 14th) in Menfi (Sicily, Italy) at: <http://www.futuralink.it>
See you in Menfi. - Juan Lucas Cervera

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