

26th European Congress of Arachnology



Israel 2011

4-8 September 2011



BEN-GURION UNIVERSITY OF THE NEGEV

BLAUSTEIN INSTITUTES FOR DESERT RESEARCH

Sede Boqer Campus, Midreshet Ben-Gurion, Israel

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Preface

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The **26th European Congress of Arachnology** (4-8 September 2011) was held for the first time in Israel, and for the first time outside the European continent. The meeting was hosted by the Blaustein Institutes for Desert Research, at the Sede Boqer Campus of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev.

The Congress drew 130 participants and 11 accompanying persons from 27 countries from all continents. The countries with highest number of participants were Israel (30), Czech Republic (13), Germany (11), Taiwan (9), Denmark (8), France (8), and the USA (6). For many of these people it was their first visit to a desert, and their first time in Israel. Overall, 118 participants (more than 90 %) contributed presentations, with 80 oral presentations and 44 posters from 38 participants. Fifteen manuscripts were submitted for evaluation for publication in the current Proceedings volume, of which 11 were accepted for publication after peer review of two or three referees.

The Congress included four invited plenary talks, one in each of the four intense days of oral and poster presentations, six symposia and nine regular sessions covered all aspects of arachnid taxonomy, systematics, ecology, physiology, genetics, and behaviour.

Outstanding plenary talks were given by Lorenzo Prendini of the American Museum of Natural History (New York, USA), who opened with a presentation on the *Assembling the Scorpion Tree of Life*; on the second day, I-Min Tso of Tunghai University (Taiwan) lectured on *The Coloration of Spiders*; Sara Goodacre, University of Nottingham (England) on *Dispersal in Spiders* on day four; and on the last day, Maydianne Andrade of the University of Toronto (Canada) presented a talk titled *Sexual Selection and Ecology Shape Plastic Development & Behavior of Spiders*. The third day of the Congress was devoted to

excursions. Symposia were organized on specific themes: arachnid systematics in the 21st century, prey-specialized spiders: ecological and evolutionary mechanisms, behavioural ecology of foraging and signals, spiders in agro-ecosystems at local and landscape scales, mating behaviour and ecology, and social spiders.

Over half of the participants presenting their work were students. We were able to obtain a large number of contributed prizes for student presentations. Awards were given for 16 outstanding oral and poster presentations in three areas: Arachnology (The European Society of Arachnology (ESA), The Arachnologische Gesellschaft (AG) and Yale University Press (YUP)), Arachnid Ecology (Oxford University Press (OUP)) and Arachnid Behavioural Ecology (Cambridge University Press (CUP)). First prizes for oral presentations went to: Chao-Chia Wu (Taiwan, ESA), Boris Leroy (France, YUP), Miriam Schaidler (Austria, AG), Christina Holm (Denmark, OUP) and Ren-Chung Chen (Taiwan, CUP). First prizes for posters were awarded to: Alberto Chiarle (Italy, AG), Chen-Pan Liao (Taiwan, OUP) and Mu-Yun Wang (England, CUP). Second prizes for talks were awarded to: Vera Opatova (Czech Rep., AG), Itai Opatovsky (Israel, OUP), Yong-Chao Su (USA, CUP) and Marija Majer (Denmark, CUP). Second prizes for posters went to: Olena Iaroshynska (Ukraine, AG), Huda Al-Beirut (Israel, OUP) and Na'ama Berner-Aharon and Reut Berger-Tal (Israel, CUP).

A highly successful social program gave local flavour and excitement to the Congress. This included a reception on the edge of the Zin Canyon followed by the traditional Russian party, an Israeli light dinner followed by a night excursion in the desert, and half-day excursions to the desert springs Ein Aqev and Ein Avdat, to the

archaeological site of Byzantine Avdat, and to the agricultural R&D station at Ashalim. The excursion day ended with relaxation at a local spa and a picnic dinner at a local park. The gala dinner at Farkhan's Bedouin tent was accompanied by a performance of the renowned group, "Jaaman". Finally, a group of about 30 people remained after the Congress to enjoy a tour to the Dead Sea and Jerusalem.

The General Assembly of the ESA members closed the ECA27 meeting. The assembly discussed varied issues such as publication in the proceedings, renewing of the society web site, and the support of the "araneae – Spiders of Europe" Web Project. New elections to council were performed and several new members joined the council: Holger Frick, Efrat Gavish-Regev, Marco Isaia and Maria Chatzaki. Ferenc Samu was confirmed as president and Seppo Koponen and Søren Toft were designated as honorary members.

All of this could not have been arranged and executed without financial help from numerous sources both within and outside BGU and the hard work of all of our students and volunteers. We take the opportunity to thank all of these people, as well as the session chairs, judges of student presentations, the scientific committee, and members of the European Arachnological Society and of course all of the Congress participants.

The papers in this volume of *Arachnologische Mitteilungen* represent a sample of the topics discussed at the Congress: taxonomy, palaeontology, biogeography, ecology and behaviour. We thank all of the referees for their careful reviews. Last but not least, the proceedings volume would never have been published without the professional attention of Theo Blick, Oliver-D. Finch, Detlev Cordes, and Jason Dunlop.

Yael Lubin &
Efrat Gavish-Regev,
co-organizers

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The contributions to this volume are online available at <http://arages.de/aramit> and at <http://www.european-arachnology.org/collo/index.shtml> and at http://cmsprod.bgu.ac.il/Eng/Units/bidr/Faculty_Members/Lubin.htm

The abstract volume (PDF) and the congress photo (JPG) are available at <http://www.european-arachnology.org/collo/index.shtml> and at http://cmsprod.bgu.ac.il/Eng/Units/bidr/Faculty_Members/Lubin.htm