

WELCOME TO THE NEW *ACAROLOGIA* - THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY VOLUME

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(published online 01 April 2010)

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EDITORIAL

Welcome to a new era in acarological history: the 1st issue of the New *Acarologia*, now published as a free open-access journal by a small team of Acarologists!

Long time readers know that *Acarologia*, founded in 1959 by Marc André and François Grandjean, is the longest publishing journal devoted exclusively to the Acari. It was Max Vachon that took the torch from Prof. Marc André as editor of the journal from 1966 to 1979. Max was then succeeded by Yves Coineau (1980 - 1996), followed by Michel Bertrand that has carried *Acarologia* into the 21st century (1997 - 2009). Throughout these years, the editors maintained the quality of the presented research and adhered to the initial objectives of the journal. Their motivation, hard work and love of acarology has assured the survival of the journal and has helped keep acarology alive as a scientific discipline.

The Journal begins a new era in 2010! *Acarologia* celebrates its golden anniversary with the publication of its 50th issue. Fifty years is a long life span for any Journal and the previous format of *Acarologia* was definitely starting to show its limits. Science

has moved on, and has brought with it an explosive increase in our knowledge of mites and ticks, both in the sheer numbers of known taxa and in the development of new technologies that have revealed previously unsuspected levels of complexity and biological detail. We were thinking about renewing *Acarologia* when Michel Bertrand announced his wish to retire. We decided that this would be the perfect occasion to build up the new *Acarologia*.

As many of you may know, the current editorial team of *Acarologia* has been constituted under my presidency and its change has coincided with the publication of this 50th anniversary volume. The new managing editorial team is supported by a scientific editorial board composed of eminent scientists from all over the World. To show our appreciation for their contributions to Acarology, we asked the members of this scientific board to contribute their work in order to make this volume a truly special one. Many have accepted this challenge and you will find in the pages that follow, the first of the four issues of this anniversary volume.

As you can see in this new issue, the Journal has drastically changed its format. The new format is full open-access, free of charges for the authors and

free of charges for access to Journal articles. Why this change? Mites and Ticks represent one of the most diverse animal groups with respect to species diversity, but also in terms of the variety of different life styles and ecological relationships they cover. The number of mite families has increased from just over 400 in 1978, to an amazing 540 in 2010. There can be few other animal groups that have grown in family-level diversity at this rate. The growth in the number of described taxa has been accompanied by significant advances in other fields of investigation: comparative morphology, genetics, physiology, molecular biology and systematics, ecology, etc. Acarologists are convinced that mites are an excellent group to carry out investigations in all fields of evolutionary and ecological research. Due to their scientific potential, this fascinating group will surely continue to attract more and more scientists from around the world and from different disciplines. The consequence will translate into a perpetual increase in our knowledge of the group and, in turn, an enhancement of excellent scientific studies requiring publication! In this world of rapid communication and fast-pace technological advances, we require a journal that is both responsive in the publication of new research and widely available to Acarologists from across the globe. We feel that the new *Acarologia* will respond to this need.

The previous editors of *Acarologia* refused to limit the journal scope to the fields of taxonomy and morphology. The Journal has always maintained a policy of trans-disciplinarity, accepting articles on physiology and ecology, along with those devoted to applied, medical, veterinary and agricultural Acarology. This policy will be continued into the future and *Acarologia* will be open to all modern fields of Acarology research. Indeed, you will find in this first issue of Volume 50, 6 excellent papers that represent both the diversity of fields covered by the journal and the diversity of authors from different countries that contribute to this fascinating field of Science! What will be the future development of Acarology and what will be its repercussions for the

content of *Acarologia*? To have some answer to this question, I invite you to read the opinion paper of Walter and Proctor in this issue, found under the heading "Opinions and reviews", a new topic section for *Acarologia* for which we make a special call for papers for future issues.

We hope that in the future *Acarologia* will continue to distinguish itself by publishing high quality research from a range of modern disciplines and to respond to timely questions: population genetics, molecular techniques, evolutionary biology, phylogeny, alternatives to the use of acaricides, the role of mites and ticks as reservoirs and transmitters of pathogens, and the list goes on. In this way, we hope to follow the example set by Michel Bertrand, showing that Acarology is a modern science and that the study of mites can be used to illustrate and illuminate all the major problems in biology.

I am honoured and proud to introduce you to the New *Acarologia*. In the name of the managing editorial team and international editorial board, I also would like to give my warmest thanks to the Acarology Community for trusting in *Acarologia*, and for their enthusiasm and support of the Journal over the last 50 years. Now, and for the years that follow, I would also like to extend our gratitude to all authors and subscribers who support, and will continue to support, *Acarologia* through their subscriptions and their contributions of high quality scientific manuscripts.

Enjoy the reading!

Serge KREITER, Editor-in-Chief of *Acarologia*,
on the behalf of the Managing Editorial Board.

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