

Minutes of the GENERAL ASSEMBLY 19th European Colloquium of Arachnology Aarhus, DENMARK (Friday 21st July 2000)
--

1) President's Report

Alain Canard (President) opened the meeting, and presented a brief report of the society's activities during the past two years.

2) Financial Report

Christine Rollard (treasurer) presented the Society's finances for the period January 1998-July 2000.

Balance sheet of subscriptions to the European Society of Arachnology
(at the beginning of July 2000)

Of 128 members (minus 10 exempt from payment):

- 49 are up to date (42 %)
- 15 have only to pay for 2000 (13 %)
- 3 are in arrears for 2 years (1999 & 2000)
- 29 are in arrears for 3 years
- 22 are in arrears for 4 years

Statement of accounts

Post Office account

Previous credit = + 7578.82 FF

Receipts

Subscriptions:	9032.73 FF
Management of environment project:	2000.00 FF
=	+ 11032.73 FF

Expenses

Colloquium in Aarhus (first part):	2056.00 FF
Bulletin n° 11:	1795.73 FF
ESA website (installation fee to Computer Student):	3500.00 FF
Stationery/Overheads:	673.00 FF
=	- 8024.73 FF
Total	+ 10586.82 FF

Cash

Previous credit = 1135.70 FF

Receipts

Subscriptions: + 3338.80 FF

Expenses

Aarhus Colloquium (second part):	-3076.00 FF
Stationery:	-1060.00 FF

Total +338.50 FF

Balance = +10925.32 FF

Very few people automatically pay their subscriptions. The remark was made that the next Treasurer should send a subscription reminder at the beginning of the year to all those who had not yet paid.

To make the Society viable, an increase in the subscription level is needed. A possible incentive for paying subscriptions regularly would be to introduce two levels of colloquium fees in future: a normal fee for members a higher fee for non-members (or those who did not pay their subscription).

The President and Treasurer 's reports were accepted unanimously.

2b) Discussions about subscriptions

Peter van Helsdingen ask why so few people had paid the year before, adding that it is easy to forget. CR replied that the treasurer ought to send out reminders more frequently than had been the case in the past. AC added that some members wonder what use the society is, and said that new ideas to promote membership would be discussed later. Marco MORETTI asked whether the society's accounts were audited. AC replied that they were not, but that this could be done in the future if members considered it desirable.

AC asked whether the members were happy to continue with the subsidy provided to the colloquia organizers. This met with no objections. He then asked the members whether they considered that the membership fee should be increased and whether the present System of two different fees should be dropped. Theo Blick suggested that this might be a good idea and asked whether it might be possible to give members who did not attend a colloquium the opportunity to buy the proceedings at a reduced rate.

Ferenc Samu asked whether it would be possible to pay dues through other societies, in a same way to the agreement between the ISA, BAS and AAS, for example. AC said that this was one of the ideas being looked into by Council, agreeing that there was a problem with bank charges. To avoid these charges, he also asked for opinions on the possibility of the designating a single member in each country to collect dues, similar to the ISA's System of correspondents. It was pointed out that not all members of the ESA were also members of some of the other societies. Peter van Helsdingen returned to the fundamental problem of members who did not pay and stressed the need for reminders. Theo Blick suggested that non-payers should be removed and CR replied that this was automatically done after 4 years of non-payment. Frederic Ysnel suggested that subscriptions might be combined with the registration fee of colloquia. Joachim Haupt suggested that some problems of non-payment might be due to confusion between the ESA and the CIDA (now ISA). MJ suggested that if such confusion had occurred, it was less likely in future, now that the ISA secretariat had moved to the USA.

Samuel Zschokke asked whether the Society had any benefactor members, suggesting that such members might provide additional income. CR replied that there was 1 benefactor and 3 moral members. AC asked whether the members felt that an increase in subscriptions was necessary, but none present spoke in favour of a change.

Methods of payment

It was noted that there is a significant loss of money due to the high bank charges with each individual payment.

Possible solutions were proposed:

- joint payment with of fees in cooperation with the ISA, EAS, AAS...;
- one member of each country could collect the fees of the members of his country and forward this to the treasurer as one payment.

The membership was in full agreement with these suggestions, which would be looked into.

3. New members

- 13 new members were accepted unanimously
- Karin Schütt asked what was required to become a member of society and, on hearing the reply, considered the System too complicated. Paul Selden agreed and Peter van Helsdingen considered

that the need to find two supporting members was particularly unnecessary. Joachim Haupt suggested that the council could simply decide whether or not a new member should be admitted. The general feeling was that the present System was cumbersome and dissuasive, and it was suggested that membership should be automatic upon reception of the application and membership fee. MJ objected that some safeguards were needed and pointed out that some applicants might be undesirable, such as those engaged in the commercial trading of mygalomorphs. Council suggested that the need for supporters be dropped and that membership would be immediate, unless the Council had doubts about the suitability of a candidate, in which case membership would be deferred until the application could be presented to the next General Assembly for a vote.
- This proposition was put to a vote and agreed unanimously.

4) Next Colloquium (2002)

AC moved to the question of the host for the 20th Colloquium. Two candidatures had been officially received: Szombathely (Hungary) and Gent (Belgium). J.P. Maelfait presented the case for Gent and F. Samu that for Szombathely. A vote was then taken:
the Szombathely venue was chosen by 36 votes to 3 (1 abstention).

AC asked if there were other points that the members wished to raise. Jacob Walter noted that the contribution of the society to colloquia was not emphasized sufficiently. The general feeling of the meeting was that as these are the colloquia of the society, this was not really necessary.

5) Other matters

AC said that he was gratified to see that an increasing number of members were willing to help the society and put forward the proposal that the number of seats on Council be increased from 12 to 15, which should result in a greater number being present at meetings. Peter Koomen asked for clarification. Ysnel put forward the French System of a "suppliant" being elected at the same time as each council member because it would become more unwieldy and less able to reach decisions, and was supported by van Helsdingen and Blick.

The question was put to a vote and rejected unanimously. The number of council members will remain 12.

The problem of repeated non-attendance by some Council Members was evoked (AC)—some are never present. LB proposed Council members who failed to attend three consecutive meetings should be required to step down from Council and would not be re-eligible for election. Theo Blick voiced support for this idea.

After being put to a vote, this rule was accepted unanimously.

- The Society's grant for the organization of colloquia

AC then returned to the question of subsidies to the Colloquia and asked whether a set of "moral rules" concerning their use by organizers should be drawn up. Hänggi replied that such questions ought to be prepared in detail before being presented to the membership for discussion, a view which met with general agreement.

The web site

AC noted that the Society's web page was still "under construction" and said that contributions and suggestions concerning its content were welcome.

AC repeats his wish to see distribution lists of European Arachnida produced by the society and reports that, with no help forthcoming, he has finished the Spiders on his own. It is hoped that members will contribute with corrections and updates, and that the list might, hopefully, to provide some revenue for the society.

Activities

1) The list of western Palaearctic Spider species is well advanced.

2) Ecology. Three working groups had originally been defined at the last colloquium in Slovakia: saline environments, fenlands and peat bogs.

PvH presented a brief report on progress with the ecology working groups. Offers of help had

only been forthcoming for 'fenlands' and 'peat bogs'. It had therefore been decided to combine these two groups as 'Peatlands', defined as any habitat where Sphagnum plays a role. The first Step to be taken was to arrive at a classification of the different peatland habitats, using existing sources. PvH made an appeal to any members who wished to help with the work of this group. AC added that the idea was for the group members to cooperate closely over the internet.

6) New Council

CR presented the results for the election of council members. Slightly less than half of the members (out of a total of 126members) voted, 52 votes having been received, of which 49 were valid.

The following were elected to the council

Theo BLICK
Alain CANARD
Jason DUNLOP
Peter VAN HELSDINGEN
Torbjörn KRONESTEDT
Christian KROPPF
Christine ROLLARD
Soren TOFT

In the absence of any further questions, the President closed the meeting at 1700hr. The attendance sheet circulated during the meeting had been signed by 32 members.

Immediately after the General Meeting, the new council met and voted the following officers of the bureau:

President:	A. CANARD (Alain.Canard@umv-rennesl.fr)
Vice-president:	S. TOFT (soeren.toft@biology.aau.dk)
Secretary:	Ch. ROLLARD (chroll@mnhn.fr)
Treasurer:	L. BAERT (leon.baert@natuurwetenschappen.be)
Vice-treasurer:	Ch. KROPPF (christian.kropf@nmbe.unibe.ch)
