

Minutes of the General Assembly for the European Society of Arachnology, Vac, 12th July 2018.

1. President's report

The president, Wolfgang Nentwig, reflected on the activities of the Society over the past year and how the Society continues to successfully fulfil its objectives. The Society continues to support the annual congress (€ 2000 in 2018) and the 'Spiders of Europe' website (€1000 in 2018). It continues to prioritise support for students and European Arachnological Society projects. Wolfgang offered thanks to the council for their efforts over the last year.

A minute's silence was held to remember a deceased member of the Society, who was friend and colleague to many: Otto Kraus.

Council membership elections were held. Jason Dunlop, Sara Goodacre, Marco Isaia, Christian Kropf, Wolfgang Nentwig and Gabriele Uhl were re-elected.

The Council for the coming year thus comprises:

- Wolfgang Nentwig - President
- Sara Goodacre – vice President
- Christian Kropf - Treasurer
- Ferenc Samu – vice Treasurer and Facebook, congress organizer 2018
- Maria Chatzaki – Media Secretary
- Jason Dunlop – Membership Secretary
- Holger Frick - Webmaster
- Marco Isaia - Newsletter
- Sara Goodacre - Newsletter
- Gabriele Uhl – Special tasks

2. Membership

Jason Dunlop reported that membership numbers are nicely increasing. There are currently 13 honorary members, 38 student members, 176 regular members and 8 memberships with waived fees, and the total membership is 235. This is the highest number of members, our society probably ever had. However, many members do not pay their annual fees regularly and this causes serious financial problems to our Society. Membership will be discontinued where fees are not paid for three consecutive years.

3. New honorary member

Following a discussion within the ESA council prior to the Vac congress, a majority was in favour of not proposing a new honorary member to the General Assembly. Instead it was proposed to discuss the rules. The discussion confirmed, in addition to article 4.3 of our by-laws, the following points:

- We do not need a new honorary member each year.
- Each ESA member can propose one candidate (thus they have to be asked for right in advance).
- The candidate must be a member of ESA.
- The candidate needs not to be retired.
- The list of proposed candidates and the ranking is discussed within the Council, but not published.

4. Treasurer's report

The report was presented to the General Assembly by Christian Kropf. As of 30/06/2018 the balance stands at 10'200 CHF, but 2300 CHF still have to be paid for the Vac congress and 1200 CHF to support the website araneae. The resulting figure of 6700 CHF is quite good, mainly because many members paid their annual fees in the last weeks. Christian Kropf acknowledged the support of Regula Markwalder, bookkeeper of the Natural History Museum Bern. The Society thanked Christian for his work and accepted the report.

5. Auditor's report

The treasurer's report was accepted on behalf of the audit by Jakob Walter.

6. European Year of Spider Biodiversity Research (2018/19)

The current declaration concerns Cyprus. The "Spider catalogue of Cyprus" (Bosmans et al.) will appear soon, comprising about 440 species for this island.

7. Student support

Reciprocal waivers with the American Arachnological Society AAS were accepted as follows:
A one year free membership follows the win for a first prize talk or a first prize poster.
AAS to ECA winners: waivers for 1 year including J. of Arachnology
ECA to AAS winners: waiver for 1 year including free registration to the next ECA meeting.
Gabriele Uhl will be in charge of the implementation of this topic.

It was critically discussed if the Society should support students attending ESA or ISA congresses. The final outcome was: up to 3 students could be supported, total amount of up to 1000 € for all 3 students as contribution to the congress expenses, this needs a very early announcement, Gabriele Uhl and Maria Chatzaki volunteered to evaluate student applications. Major condition: this works only if money is available. There was no willingness to discuss a potential support of student projects, for financial reasons.

8. Facebook

Ferenc Samu showed the increasing usage and importance of the Society's Facebook page.

9. Website

Holger Frick reported on the increasing usage of our website which is active in its new format since early 2016. The most visited pages are the conference proceedings, information on conferences and the spider of the year.

10. Newsletter & Proceedings

Sara Goodacre and Marco Isaia informed that a newsletter will be produced after the congress and that all contributions from members are welcome. Theo Blick confirmed that 'Arachnologische Mitteilungen' continues to be the vehicle for conference proceedings, meanwhile also with the English title 'Arachnology Letters'. The deadline for submission of congress publications is November 30th 2018.

11. Next conferences

2020: The ESA 32nd European Congress will be held in Greifswald, Germany, organized by Gabriele Uhl and Peter Michalik.

2021: The ESA 33rd European Congress will be held in Saint Malo, France. Organizers are Julien Pétilion and colleagues.

12. Closing ceremony

A vote of thanks was given to Tamás Szüts, Csaba Szinetár and Ferenc Samu and the other members of the Vac conference organising team for making the meeting such a success and the president hoped to see all members once again at the next congress.