

IOP NEWSLETTER 77

October 2004

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The views expressed in the newsletter are those of its correspondents, and do not necessarily reflect the policy of IOP.

President: Margaret Collinson (UK)
Vice Presidents: Mikhail Akhmetiev (Russia), Zlatko Kvaček (Czech Republic), Volker Mosbrugger (Germany)
Secretary: Gar Rothwell (USA)
Conference/Congress Member: Hans Kerp (Germany)

NEW IOP EXECUTIVE

Results of the first fully electronic International Organisation of Palaeobotany balloting have been tabulated by the secretary and confirmed by the president. We are happy to announce that the new IOP Executive consists of the following:

President:

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Vice Presidents:

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IOPC-VIII & IPC TO BE HELD IN BONN, GERMANY

As has been announced earlier, the next IOPC will be held in Bonn Germany in the summer of 2008. The IOPC will be coordinated with the IPC, and will be

organized by Hans Kerp, Münster. Additional information and updates on plans for IOPC-VIII will appear periodically in future IOP Newsletters.

PROPOSED REVISIONS TO IOP STATUTES

Revisions to the IOP Statutes have been underway for several months. A draft of the proposed revised Statutes was circulated to the IOP Executive by the Secretary last spring, and further revisions were made in response to comments. Following a second round of revisions, the new IOP Statutes will be presented to the membership for a ratification vote at the International Botanical Congress at Vienna in the summer of 2005. Those who are interested in reviewing the old IOP statutes can find them on the internet at <http://oak.cats.ohiou.edu/~rothwell/IOP-Newsletters/index.htm>

REFLECTIONS ON THE ELECTONS

The recently completed IOP Executive elections were both a success of new technology, and somewhat of a frustration for the Secretary. The system of electronic balloting that was developed for this election appears to have worked well. Over 95% of the ballots were received as e-mail attachments. The remaining ballots were received either in the body of an e-mail or by traditional post, thus allowing all of the membership to participate in the vote.

As each ballot was received by the Secretary, it was placed in an electronic folder dedicated to IOP ballots. Once the deadline for voting had passed, the eligibility of each voter was verified by the e-mail address of the sender, and the ballot was printed. This procedure provided both for a verification of eligibility to vote, and for the anonymity of voters to be maintained. The votes were tabulated by the Secretary, and the winners determined. The paper ballots were then mailed to the President for an independent vote count, and to verify the winning candidates.

This was the success part. To my knowledge, ours is the first fully electronic balloting to be attempted by an international professional organization. The procedures for gathering ballots, for assuring anonymity of balloting, and for accurately counting ballots all worked smoothly.

The frustration came from the slowness with which nominations were received by the Secretary. There were three calls for nominations over the period of several months, and no nominations were received until after the third call had been made. Coupled with the early date of IOPC-VII (March, instead of July or August), the slow response to the calls for nominations prevented the balloting from being completed in Bariloche.

In the future, we will attempt to improve communication about the nomination process to promote earlier nominations. We also will encourage Regional Representatives to solicit nominations from their membership. These measures are designed to allow us to return to the practice of completing the election process for the new Executive at the IOPC. Another possibility for consideration of the membership is to establish a nominating committee prior to each election to find and encourage a full slate of good candidates.

The membership is encouraged to send suggestions for improving the election process to the Secretary, rothwell@ohio.edu. These suggestions will be discussed by the Executive Committee, and possible revisions in the election process will be considered.

Gar Rothwell
Secretary IOP

MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS

The XI Paleobotanists and Palynologists Meeting will be held in Granados, Brazil, in November 2004. More information is available at the web site: www.exatec.unisinos.br/_rpp2004

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The 7th European Palaeobotany - Palynology Conference will take place September 6 - 11, 2006 in Prague, Czech Republic. As decided at the 6th European conference, this traditional meeting of palaeobotanists is organised in Prague, Czech Republic in 2006 by the Charles University, Faculty of Science,

National Museum, Institute of Geology, Academy of Science of the Czech Republic, Prague and the Westbohemian Museum, Pilsen.

The conference is opened to all persons interested in any aspect of the plant fossil record. The scientific program will include symposia, contributed papers, poster sessions, and meetings of working groups, associated with workshops. Pre- and post-conference field trips to the Barrandian Early Palaeozoic, Permocarboniferous, Cretaceous and Cenozoic are planned as well. The official language of the conference is English.

This conference will include meetings of IOP, NECLIME project and is immediately followed by the CIMP meeting. For information on NECLIME, please contact Angela Bruch (angela.bruch@uni-tuebingen.de), for information on the CIMP meeting, please contact Jiřek Bek (mrbean@gli.cas.cz) or Oldřich Fatka (fatka@natur.cuni.cz <<mailto:fatka@natur.cuni.cz>>).

We hope that the participants will be able to spend time downtown. Prague, the capital of the Czech Republic, is one of the most beautiful cities in Europe with attractive sites of medieval architecture. Both the landscape and art have created a manifold collection of monuments from ten centuries - starting with Romanesque churches up to modern art buildings - making a unique open-air gallery.

More information about prices of housing, field trips and companions program, registration fee, etc. will be available in the spring 2005. The deadline to respond to the first registration for the conference is December 31, 2004. (For the registration form, see our web site).

The scientific program will consist of invited papers for symposia and volunteered contributed papers for oral and poster sessions. Each participant is invited to present results of original new research or summary reviews on particular topics. The symposium topics will include plant systematics and evolution, palaeoecology, taphonomy and biostratigraphy within the Proterozoic, Palaeozoic, Mesozoic and Cenozoic palaeobotany and palynology. Any other topic relevant to palaeobotany is eligible for inclusion.

A series of field trips will be arranged for the participants and their companions. The list of field trips is preliminary. The realisation of all excursions depends on a sufficient number of participants signing up.

The tentative schedule of the trips is:

06. 09. Lower Palaeozoic of the Barrandian area (O. Fatka)
09. 09. Exhibition on Carboniferous and Cretaceous fossil plants and the collections of the National Museum, Prague
12. 09. Carboniferous of Central Bohemia (J. Pšenička, M. Libertkn)
- Cretaceous of Central Bohemia (J. Kvaček)
- 12.- 13. 09 Tertiary of NW Bohemia (J. Sakala, Z. Kvaček)
13. 09. Czech Quaternary (P. Pokorný, V. Jankovská)

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Zlatko Kvaček, Prague.

The Third South American Meeting on Phytolith Research will be held in Tucumán (Northwestern Argentina) from March the 16th to 18th 2005. Its aims are to share within the scientific community new methodological perspectives, and advances or difficulties of the studies on phytoliths in our region.

The phytoliths studies is an interdisciplinary discipline since its beginning in XIX century and it involves researchers from areas such as Biology, Archaeology, Agricultural Sciences, Geology, Pedology, Paleontology.

From 1999 on a group of Argentinean and Uruguayan researchers view the need of organizing periodical meetings among the people studying or making applications of phytoliths in their researches. The [Primer Encuentro de Investigaciones Fitolíticas "J. Frenguelli"](http://www.ceride.gov.ar/gefac/1eif.htm) was held in the city of Diamante during 1999. For the second meeting the expectations were opened broadly to all Latin America giving place to the [Segundo Encuentro de Investigaciones Fitolíticas del Cono Sur](http://www.ceride.gov.ar/gefac/2eif.htm) in the city of Mar del Plata, at the end of 2001. This [Tercer Encuentro de Investigaciones Fitolíticas del Cono Sur](http://www.fundaciontiempos.org/iarqueo/fitolitos/inde)

[x.htm](#) has the chance to enhance the perspectives of phytolith studies to larger areas and problems and focus as well into methodological issues. The meeting will encourage the integration of investigators researching in the different thematic areas of phytolith studies, and the aim is to obtain a growth in the investigations on phytoliths and other close microfossils at the macro regional level. This is considered especially important to stimulate the young researchers and students who are being developed, because of the possibilities to discuss their advances with people nearby and people coming from other countries facilitates their enthusiasm and also the possibility of establishing contacts to deepen their studies.

The final programme is not completed yet as the deadline to propose Symposia, Talks, Laboratory Demonstrations or Workshops is June 15th 2004; and the deadlines for Abstracts submission is September 15th 2004. However the proposed topics and areas are:

BIOLOGY: Current organisms, production and morphological variability. Systematics. Environments. Anatomy. Physiology. History and current perspectives in the subject. Other themes.

GEOLOGY: Sediments. Soils and paleo-soils. Environments and paleoenvironments. Alteration processes. Silica cycle. Catchment areas. Systematics. History and current perspectives in the subject. Other themes.

PALEONTOLOGY: Paleobotany Sediments. Paleoenvironments. Paleoecology. Catchment areas. Residues in teeth. Systematics. History and current perspectives in the subject. Other themes.

AGRONOMICAL SCIENCES: Soils. Natural and artificial fodder modifications and use from phytoliths perspective. Irrigation. History and current perspectives in the subject. Other themes.

ARCHAEOLOGY: Economic plants. Ancient agriculture. Recipients. Activities areas. Residues in teeth, feces, or stomach remains. Catchment areas. Paleoenvironments. Multiple microfossil recovery. History and current perspectives in the subject. Other themes.

The conference is sponsored by: FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS NATURALES E INSTITUTO MIGUEL LILLO (Universidad Nacional de Tucumán); INSTITUTO DE ARQUEOLOGÍA Y MUSEO (Universidad Nacional de Tucumán); & GRUPO DE

ESTUDIOS FITOLITICOS APLICADOS DEL CONO SUR www.arcride.edu.ar/gefacs

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The 12th International Gondwana Symposium will be held November 6-11 2005 in Mendoza, in the foothills of the Andes and at the centre of a region known worldwide for the quality its sun and wine. We anticipate a large international attendance due to the broad scope of the meeting and the attractive location of the venue. The symposium returns to Argentina 38 years after its initial meeting in Mar del Plata in 1967.

Gondwana existed as a generally stable supercontinent for a large portion of Phanerozoic eon (approximately 250 million years, from Devonian to the end of Jurassic times), during which life on Earth evolved radically. Nevertheless, the world was at times extremely violent, with intensely active volcanism, continental collisions and widespread mountain building. It also experienced global change on a scale that we would hardly recognise today, with extremes of climate and sedimentary environments; major biotic crises occurred that resulted in extinction events, and were succeeded by the appearance of new marine and terrestrial biota. The International Gondwana Symposium seeks to stimulate the exchange of ideas between scientists with common interests in the history of this supercontinent, to develop our understanding of the processes at work in the past and their significance to the problems that mankind faces at present, and provide guidance to the search for important natural resources.

Information concerning Gondwana 12 can be found on the Symposium web page: <http://cig.museo.unlp.edu.ar/gondwana>, which will be regularly updated. Please make your plans now to attend.

You can help us with the organisation by completing the Preliminary Expression of Interest on the website. All

those who do so will receive the printed 2nd Circular, which is being scheduled for distribution in February 2005.

We are confident that you will find Gondwana 12 an exciting conference, and Mendoza a friendly and interesting place to visit. We look forward to seeing you in Mendoza in November of 2005!

Carlos Rapela and Luis Spalletti

The 3rd South American Dendrochronological Fieldweek will be held at the Center for Research and Nature Conservation Pró-Mata (CPCN Pró-Mata), Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, between 8th – 14th January 2005. Through the Dendrochronological Fieldweek we aim to familiarize researchers and graduate students with the many applications of tree-ring studies to environmental sciences. Internationally experienced dendrochronologists will guide groups of students carrying out a variety of projects involving field and laboratory work, discussion and presentation of research findings.

We hope all participants will enjoy and profit by experiencing the application of these valuable techniques of environment research and take advantage of the opportunity to develop personal contacts that could lead to significant future collaborative research.

The location of the Fieldweek is at the Center for Research and Nature Conservation Pró-Mata (29° 28' 50"S; 50° 10' 25"W; 900 m asl), Rio Grande do Sul state, Brazil (see location map). The center is located northeast from Porto Alegre (state capital), about four hours by road. The main vegetation types are Atlantic Rain Forest, *Araucaria angustifolia* Forest and Campos grassland, comprising a great ecological mosaic. We will spend a week in this magnificent region reading the messages encrypted in tree rings, under the guidance of well recognized group leaders.

More information can be obtained from the website at: <http://www.cricyt.edu.ar/>

NEW IGCP PROJECT 499

“Devonian Land-Sea Interaction: Evolution of Ecosystems and Climate (DEVEC)”

Leaders of the project are Dr. Peter Königshof (*), Dr. Jurga Lazauskiene (**), Dr. Eberhard Schindler (*), PD

Dr. Volker Wilde (*) and Prof. Dr. M. Namik Yalçın(***)

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We have to announce a new IGCP-Project which was accepted by the UNESCO/IGCP Scientific Board in February 2004. The brief outline of the project is following:

The Devonian was a critical period with respect to the diversification of early terrestrial ecosystems. The geotectonic setting was characterized by the switch from the post-Caledonian to the pre-Variscan situation. Plant life on land evolved from tiny tracheophytes to trees of considerable size in combination with a global increase in terrestrial biomass, and vertebrates started to conquer the land. Extensive shallow marine areas and continental lowlands with a wide range of different habitats existed which are preserved in a large number of basins all around the world. Climate change finally led from greenhouse to icehouse conditions towards the end of the Devonian. Both rapid evolution of terrestrial ecosystems and climate change had a pronounced influence on sedimentation and biodiversity not only in the terrestrial but also in the marine realm ("Devonian Change"). A major goal of the proposed project will be to focus on controls and interactions of the respective facies parameters in different paleogeographic settings in order to refine the global picture by international co-operation in a number of case studies. Geoscientific co-operation will include a variety of disciplines, such as sedimentology, paleontology, stratigraphy, paleoclimatology, paleogeography, geochemistry, paleoceanography, and structural geology.

The rapid evolution of early life on land and its interaction with sedimentary processes, climate, and paleogeography, both on land and in marine settings, will be covered by studies in different terrestrial and marine facies. Increasing colonization of the land by plants in combination with soil-forming processes and changing runoff led to major changes of sediment input into the marine system. On the other hand, sediment input and climate are major controls for carbonate production and reef development. The study of responses and interactions thus needs detailed characterization of facies and high-resolution correlation which can only be provided by a refined stratigraphy including biostratigraphy, lithostratigraphy, chronostratigraphy, etc. Characterization of facies and correlation of stratigraphic units is especially difficult in marine-terrestrial transitions and will be an important focus of the project. Resolution of sea-level changes will be enhanced by recognition and exact correlation of their effects which may be hidden just in these transitions. On the background of the global geotectonic situation (paleogeography s.l.), this will be an important prerequisite for a better discrimination of eustatic, climatic, and biotic controls, both on regional and global scale.

The focus of the project concerns the interrelated evolution of terrestrial and marine paleoecosystems with respect to biotic and abiotic factors in space and time. Studies will include individual paleoecosystems and their components as well as their paleobiogeographic distribution. Biotic and abiotic factors of paleoecosystems are controlled by both earthbound and extraterrestrial triggers causing either cyclicality and/or distinct events. Thus in turn, such studies may give a clue to underlying causes of global changes. The project will include sedimentologic and climatic controls of reef development and distribution as well as diversity, and paleoecology of reef building organisms throughout the Devonian, because the Middle to Late Devonian was a peak in reef development with reefs spreading into latitudes as high as 45-60 degrees. On the other hand, accommodation space for Early Devonian reefs was greatly reduced due to major input of sediment from the continents in combination with sea-level lowstand(s). A marked decline in reef development towards the end of the Devonian was probably caused by climatic deterioration.

The integrative kind of research which is needed for the success of the proposed project can only be carried out by a worldwide network of research groups representing different disciplines. Such a network can now be based

on core groups successfully participating in the recently completed IGCP 421. Furthermore, the project will extend the results of the former IGCP 328. It will actively interlink with the existing IGCP 491 which is mainly centered around vertebrate research. But, the proposed project will concentrate on the correlation and interaction of different ecosystems in a more general way. Special attention will be paid to coupling effects between the terrestrial and marine realm. Co-operation is also intended with the proposed IGCP "The Rheic Ocean: its origin, evolution and correlatives". Furthermore, an active network is represented by the members of the "Subcommission on Devonian Stratigraphy" (SDS). These existing networks will be integrated and thus provide the necessary base for an improved understanding of the Devonian period. A number of respective colleagues and working groups have already agreed to contribute to the proposed project (see letters of support).

For supporting the network and communication among the participants there will be a website provided which will be hosted at the Senckenberg Research Institute and Natural History Museum. It will include links to participating groups/institutions and other relevant sites such as funding agencies.

Further information may be obtained from the respective website www.senckenberg.de/igcp-499/

Colleagues interested in participation should contact one of the leaders in Frankfurt, for palynology/palaeobotany, preferably V. Wilde; colleagues from Turkey should directly contact M. N. Yalçin (all contact details see above). Mailing address for all of the project leaders in Frankfurt is: Forschungsinstitut und Naturmuseum Senckenberg, Senckenberganlage 25, 60325 Frankfurt am Main, Germany.

NEWS OF THE MEMBERSHIP

Congratulations to Gar Rothwell ! - Our own IOP secretary, Gar W. Rothwell, was recognized by his university at their spring graduation ceremonies on June 11, 2004. He was named as the newest University Distinguished Professor. This is the highest honor that Ohio University gives to its faculty members and recognizes Gar's scholarly accomplishments, his professional reputation, and his contributions to his university. This is a permanent position and also allows Gar to award a student scholarship recipient each year. Of course, those of us in IOP know how hard Gar has

worked for us, but it's good to know that his university also recognizes him for his many and distinguished contributions to paleobotany. Congratulations, Gar!

For more information, see O.U.'s press release: <http://www.ohio.edu/outlook/426n-034.cfm>

Edie Taylor, University of Kansas

CHANGES OF ADDRESS

To help keep up with our mobile membership, we are initiating a policy of including changes of address for IOP members in the IOP Newsletter. Please send your change of address information to your Regional Representative and/or to the Secretary so that this information can be added to the membership information and included in a Newsletter. The first change of address is as follows:

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OBITUARIES

Erwin Knobloch (1934 - 2004): On April 11th 2004, RNDr Erwin Knobloch, CSc. passed away after long illness at age of 70. He was one of the best experts in European Cenozoic floras.

Erwin Knobloch was born on September 7, 1934 into a family of German weavers in Dolný Křečany at Rumburk, northern Bohemia. In Rumburk, after being apprenticed to a weaver, he attended the secondary school (gymnasium). Later he studied at the Charles University in Prague (1953-1958) and graduated in palaeobotany (M.Sc. thesis on the Tertiary flora of the Pirskenberg Hill at Šluknov). After finishing his studies, he worked several years as a geologist. in the brown-coal industry in the Sokolov Basin and Mydlovary in southern Bohemia In 1961 he was engaged by the

former Central Geological Institute in Prague (now Czech Geological Survey), where he worked as a palaeobotanist until his retirement in 1998.

His research was mainly concerned with Cretaceous and Tertiary leaf and seed-fruit assemblages, with a short digression into the Carboniferous. He will be largely remembered for his monographs (e.g., Tertiary floras of Moravia, Pliocene Broad-leaved Forest of Willershausen), some of which were written in co-operation with D. H. Mai (Cretaceous fruits and seeds of Europe) and others including myself (various Tertiary floras in central Europe). He published almost 300 scientific papers (see the attached bibliography), organized several state as well as international research projects, meetings, and also engaged in popular scientific activities (see his contributions to "Fossilien", a journal for amateur palaeontologists). He co-operated not only within the former Czechoslovak Republic (mainly with the Central Paratethys group), but also with colleagues in Germany (Dieter H. Mai, Harald Walther, Hans-Joachim Gregor), Greece (Evangelos Velitzelos), England (Margaret Collinson) and elsewhere. Since 2000 he had suffered a brain disease, and after a long but unsuccessful treatment in the hospital, died on April 11, 2004 in Prague.

References:

Kvaček, Z., Mai, H. D., Walther, H. (in press): Erwin Knobloch (27. September 1934 - 11. April 2004) - Palaeontographica, Abt. B.

Zlatko Kvaček, Prague