

On the Retirement of John S. Noyes

Dr. John S. Noyes, the distinguished chalcidologist (one of the editorial advisors of *Biosystematica*), celebrated his 60th birthday on April 3rd 2009 and retired from service. This is an opportunity to congratulate him and acknowledge his outstanding research work on the biosystematics of Chalcidoidea.

It was in November 1979, I first met John when he visited India in connection with his research on Chalcidoidea. While sitting in the guest house of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore, John and I talked for about two hours on various matters of research of mutual interest and in particular on my forthcoming visit to the British Museum (Natural History), London (BMNH, now the Natural History Museum, London). While leaving John at TNAU, my first impression of him was that of a very nice gentleman with pleasing

manners. (Now after about two decades since I first met him I do still have the same feeling about him).

John Stuart Noyes was born as the only son of Mr. Herbert Noyes and Mrs. Beryl Noyes, at Cardiff, South Glamorgan, Wales, and U.K. in 1949. At a very young age he developed a fascination for studies on insects. At the age of seven John was interested in collecting and studying moths and butterflies and in 1963 when John was 14 years old, an article entitled “His Hobby Has Wings” appeared in a local Newspaper “Pontypridd Observer” about John. In this article the reporter, Douglas A. Grosvenor, stated that “at the age of 14 John is very much the master of his craft” meaning his interests in entomology. In later years John himself has proved that he is really a master in his entomological research on Encyrtidae of the World. His early interests



in moths and butterflies at a young age might have helped him to some extent in his later years when he started working on chalcids many of which parasitizes the young stages of moths and butterflies. John took his honours degree in Zoology and Applied Entomology and later his doctoral degree from Imperial College of Science and Technology, London. His doctoral thesis was on the biology of leek moth *Acrolepiopsis assectella* (Zeller). In 1974 John was appointed as a researcher on Chalcidoidea at the BMNH. In 1980-1981 he worked on secondment in the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, New Zealand leading a survey of Chalcidoidea occurring in New Zealand. John has traveled widely to many countries (more than once to some countries) in both the New and Old Worlds in connection with his research on chalcidoidea. He has about 80 research papers published, in peer reviewed journals, and also some large monographs and masterpieces. He has discovered (described) 1 new family, 88 new genera 644 new species of chalcids, revised several genera and species and provided useful workable keys to many groups for species identification. Currently he is revising the 1,500 plus species of Encyrtidae found in Costa Rica. He has collaborated with several international scientists as can be seen from his publications. His pioneering work on the development and maintenance of interactive catalogue and biological database of Chalcidoidea (Universal Chalcidoidea Database) is perhaps unique in the history of data bases. This was entirely designed and compiled single-handed by John and will be ever remembered by posterity. John started this data base in 1991 and maintained it excellently until his retirement. Recently it came as a shock to me (and surely to many others also) when he wrote to me that he is going to call it a day and was planning to hand the database over to others to maintain. I hope John will leave his "mantle" like Elijah so that some one may inherit his excellent work who will continue to maintain the data base in the same standard. Besides chalcidologists some students were also benefited by John's teaching and guidance work. He has supervised 2 PhD students. He was examiner to 3 Ph.D. students and 3 MPhil students. Some of the Indian students who attended the course on biology and taxonomy of Parasitic Insects organized annually by BMNH and Imperial College at Silwood Park (1993-2004) and Sheffield University (1985-1993) told me that John is a very good teacher. John is a member of the editorial board of many research journals. Peers have named 1 genus and 38 species after John, including one beetle and one bug as well as taxa belonging to various families of Hymenoptera. He is Fellow of the Royal *Biosystematica*, 2009, 3(1)

Entomological Society of London and a member of International Society of Hymenopterists.

When I went to John's house in 1980 with my teacher Dr.Z.Boucek and Madame Tania Boucek, I enjoyed the excellent hospitality of Mary, John's wife who gave us an excellent dinner. I could also meet his two lovely children Lizzie and Jenni. After about three decades when I met John in June last year at BMNH I was very happy to find him the same good old pleasing character. I consider it a privilege to have John as one of my best friends and colleague all through these years of my research career. On this occasion of his 60th birthday and his retirement from service, on behalf of the editorial board of *Biosystematica* and my own behalf I wish him many more years of productive research and all the best life can offer in the years to come.

T.C.Narendran
Editor -in-chief

Selected works of Dr. John S. Noyes

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