

essential phylogenetic framework for the New Guinea death adders. However, given the physiographic complexity of the island, a more detailed picture of patterns of genetic variation is desirable prior to publication. For this reason, the applicant is still in the process of acquiring and analysing additional samples of death adders from other parts of Papua New Guinea to generate a more comprehensive analysis. Additional samples from West Papua (Indonesia) are being analysed, and collaborative research links forged during the applicant's visit to PNG are already yielding additional material from areas not currently covered. We have therefore held back from publishing the existing data until a more comprehensive analysis can provide the data for a more paper in a higher impact science journal. The phylogeographical pattern revealed in our tree is of considerable biogeographical interest, in that, surprisingly, the Madang (northern coast) populations cluster closely with populations from the southwestern part of PNG, on the other side of the mountains, whereas populations from Central Province form a very distinct cluster that forms the sister group of all other populations of the *A. laevis* complex. The phylogeographic pattern is shown in Figure 2. Interestingly, patterns of morphological variation are incongruent with the phylogeographical pattern, populations from the northern coast being more similar to those from Central Province than to those from southwestern PNG.

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The purpose of my visit was to work on the millipede (Diplopoda) collection of the Canterbury

Table 1. „Species groups” of the studied material belonging to the genus *Eumastigonus*.

„SPECIES”	TUBES ASSOCIATED
<i>E. insulanus</i>	40
close to <i>insulanus</i>	5
<i>E. distinctior</i>	3
close to <i>distinctior</i>	8
<i>E. kaorinus</i>	10
<i>E. hemmingseni</i>	7
<i>E. kaikourae</i> sp. n.	30
<i>E. hallelujah</i> sp. n.	20
<i>E. otekauri</i> sp. n.	18
<i>E. „unilineatus”</i> sp. n.	18
<i>E. „Vinegar Hill”</i> sp. n.	4
<i>E. „Wanganui”</i> sp. n.	5
<i>E. „totara”</i> sp. n.	12
<i>E. „Goose Bay”</i> sp. n.	9
several sp. n. (dubious?)	15
new genus (not <i>Eumastigonus</i> !)	2
North Island females	12
unidentified females	13
Total	231

Museum, in collaboration with Peter M. Johns, Research Fellow, who, in the past forty years, accumulated a considerable zoological material covering almost the entire territory of New Zealand. During previous discussions (we also met in 1995 when I carried out a two-month study trip to NZ), we selected an endemic and little known millipede genus, the *Eumastigonus* Chamberlain, 1920 (Spirostreptida: Iulomorphidae), for taxonomical revision; there were eight species described up to now, and about 30 more are expected as new for science from NZ.

During my four-week stay in the Canterbury Museum, I studied about 400 vials (16 jars, with cca. 25 tubes each) amounting to about 2000 specimens (5 individuals in every

tube, in average). They were all properly labelled as regards collector, locality and date; additional details on habitat and distribution were provided by Peter M. Johns. The collecting localities represented almost the whole New Zealand. In the limited time given, the entire material could not be described and identified; however, the individuals studied were grouped into 14 „species” (see Table 1). A general introduction to the taxonomy of the genus *Eumastigonus*, and descriptions of two selected („compact”) new species for science (*E. „kaikourae”* and *E. „hallelujah”*) are being prepared as a joint manuscript for publication in a high standard international scientific journal (*Zootaxa*).

In addition to the laboratory (col-

Table 2. Collecting localities, in collaboration with Peter Johns.

Region	Township (locality)	Geographical coordinates	Altitude (m a. s. l.)	Habitat	Date (2006)
Canterbury	Christchurch, West Melton	S43°31' – E172°22'	187	in garden	13-19 May
Canterbury	Rakaia Gorge flood terrace	S43°31' – E171°39'	230	<i>Sycamore</i> – <i>Cordyline</i> mixed forest	20 May
Canterbury	Rakaia Gorge walkway	S43°31' – E171°39'	280	degraded broadleaf shrub	20 May
Banks Peninsula	Hinewai Reserve	S43°48' – E173°01'	460	<i>Nothofagus fusca</i> remnant	21 May
N Canterbury	Hope River, Engineers Camp	S42°33' – E172°21'	525	<i>Nothofagus fusca</i> forest	27 May
N Canterbury	Hammer Springs, Jollies Pass	S42°29' – E172°52'	825	<i>Nothofagus cliffortioides</i> forest	27 May
N Canterbury	Porters Pass	S43°17' – E171°44'	946	mountain tussockland, under stones	28 May
N Canterbury	Craigieburn Forest Park	S43°09' – E171°43'	821	<i>Nothofagus cliffortioides</i> forest	28 May
Kaikoura	Hapuku Scenic Reserve	S42°18' – E173°43'	55	coastal broadleaf forest	3 June
Kaikoura	Mt Fyffe Conservation Area	S42°21' – E173°34'	192	coastal broadleaf forest	3 June

lection) work, with the kind help of Peter M. Johns, I also carried out field collectings during the weekends. Altogether we visited eight places (see Table 2), including two (Kaikoura and Craigieburn) which proved to be type localities of the two proposed new species (*E. „kaikourae”* and *E. „hallelujah”*, respectively).

On June 1st I presented a talk for the Museum staff with the title „Challenge in the 21st century: the Hungarian Natural History Museum, Budapest”, in which I gave a short summary of the history of the Budapest Museum, a general overview about its collection and research organization, as well as an outlook into the future.

I feel that my visit was very successful; in the short time I spent in the Canterbury Museum, additionally supported by the Systematic Association (The Linnean Society, London), we achieved a great progress in the systematic collection of millipede specimens belonging to the family Iulomorphidae, New Zealand. In collaboration with Peter Johns, and based on extant material, we clarified the taxonomical position of the genus *Eumastigonus*, prepared of the description of two new species, and sorted out the material in species groups for future study. To continue the project, we are looking to funding possibilities for another visit in 2007.

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Details of the SA research grants, conference bursaries and funding for the organisation of meetings can be found at:
www.systass.org

Report from the President

Current status and objectives of the Systematics Association

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It has become sufficiently de rigueur for incoming presidents of the Association to review its current status that I would feel uncomfortable breaking that continuity. In fact, this extended article is based on a document that I first drafted as President-elect in September 2006, when presenting the Association's credentials as a potential founder member of a new Europe-wide systematics organization, BioSyst Europe (issues move sufficiently rapidly in politics that BioSyst Europe has already provisionally agreed to heavy involvement in the 2009 biennial conference).

This document also informed, and has in turn been informed by, a series of quarterly working groups established in January to 'horizon scan' in the specific areas of leadership, events, finances and publications. In preparation for these working groups, at its January meeting Council reviewed progress made in the wake of the Association's Williams report and of the ensuing subcommittees (late 2003-early 2004) and the joint Association/Linnean strategic working group (early 2005). It was heartening to realize that most of the recommendations of previous committees had ultimately been enacted, and it proved reasonably straightforward to immediately enact others that were designed primarily to improve the modus operandi of Council.

In reviewing our current position it is important to distinguish between areas of the Association's

activity that operate satisfactorily (e.g. the Biennial conferences) from those where improvement may be desirable. Given that we currently have, and are likely to continue to have, limited resources in terms of both finances and manpower, it would prove difficult to promote radical new areas of activity; indeed, initiating a new activity may well require abandonment of an existing activity, and there are no obvious candidates for the axe in the following account. Moreover, the goals listed below are strongly interconnected in a web-like fashion, which makes them very difficult to discuss (or modify) in isolation. It is, perhaps, primarily a question of prioritizing where we choose to exert tension on the existing web.

Mission

To promote all aspects of systematic (comparative) biology - including microbiology and palaeontology, professional and amateur, theory and practice - through conferences, workshops, publications, grants and the media.

Activities and output

Most of the areas outlined below are currently under active review.

(1) *Biennial international conference*

Established in 1997, international biennial conferences have thus far been held, in chronological order, in Oxford, Glasgow, London, Dublin and Cardiff. Plans for the 2007 biennial in Edinburgh (28-31