

FORUM

Abstracts of the 9th Annual Congress of the “Gesellschaft für Biologische Systematik” (GfBS)

The online edition of this contribution contains the abstracts of 77 oral presentations and keynote lectures, and of 75 posters presented during the “9. Jahrestagung der Gesellschaft für Biologische Systematik (GfBS)” held on 20–23 February 2007 at the Natural History Museum Vienna (NHM) (see also <http://www.nhm-wien.ac.at/NHM/3Zoo/gfbs07home.htm>). The congress was organised by the NHM with the collaboration of the “Freunde des Naturhistorischen Museums” and the University of Vienna. The meeting, attended by 257 participants from 10 countries, was inaugurated by Bernd Lötsch, director of the NHM, Wolfgang Wägele, president of the GfBS, and by the chairwoman/organiser, Ulrike Aspöck.

The congress covered a wide range of biosystematics-related themes, focusing on (i) naming and ranking in zoology, (ii) naming and ranking in botany, (iii) naming and ranking in protistology, (iv) ancient DNA, (v) seeing the whole picture: palaeontology and systematics, (vi) co-evolution, (vii) anthropology. These topics were introduced by seven keynote lectures: “Artbegriff in der Zoologie – theoretisch und pragmatisch” by Walter Sudhaus, “New developments in the implementation of phylogenetic naming” by Susanne Renner, “The species concept and protist evolution” by Martin Schlegel, “Genetic variation in Holocene bowhead whales from Svalbard” by Lutz Bachmann, “Der Beitrag der Paläontologie zur modernen Systematik” by Jes Rust, “The parasites of humans in the light of co-evolution” by Horst Aspöck and Julia Walochnik, and “So many hominid fossils but so little systematic rigor” by Jeff Schwartz.

Complementary topics included biogeography, DNA of organelles, and morphology. A whole session was

devoted to museum collections and database-related topics. The conference was opened on Tuesday with the meeting of curators chaired by Marion Kotrba. In addition, Gerhard Steiner organised a workshop on “Bayes'sche Methoden in der phylogenetischen Rekonstruktion”.

The participants had the chance to visit the scientific collections and the exhibitions of the NHM. There was ample opportunity for discussions at the ice-breaker evening at the museum, including an oyster/wine-tasting session, and at the conference dinner at one of Vienna's most famous “Heurigen”, namely Fuhrgassl-Huber.

Responses and reactions from the participants were positive without exception and can be summed up by the comment of one participant that this conference was a mega-hit (“der absolute Hammer”). The organisers are grateful to all participants for their professional contributions and for their high spirits. We thank all persons from GfBS and from the organising institutions who helped before and during the congress, and we are much obliged for the financial support from various sponsors.

Appendix A. Supplementary Materials

Abstracts and posters presentations can be found in the online version at doi:10.1016/j.ode.2007.06.001.

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