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The Conference emphasizes the importance of faunistic research and provides selected or extended abstracts, short communications or full papers from 26 presentations by professors, scientific researchers, graduate, master or doctoral students from nine countries: Italy, Czech Republic, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Russia, Canada, USA, Ecuador.

Key words: aphidology, biodiversity, Bucculatricidae, Carabidae, Coleoptera, Cossidae, Crysomelidae, Curculionoidea, guava, Hylobius, Gracillariidae, fauna, faunistics, field methods, entomology, Kurtuvėnai Regional Park, leaf-mines, leaf-mining insects, Lepidoptera, Lepidoptera phylogeny, Lithuanian Entomological Society, micro-mounts, Nepticulidae, Tischeriidae, Tortricidae.

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**Urgent need for increased faunistic research**

Recent decades have been characterized by faunistics and systematics regaining their significance and now these disciplines are becoming an important area of biological research. One of the most fundamental challenges for mankind of the 21st century is to document the extent and distribution of global biodiversity as well as understand the ecological processes that generate and maintain it. Such information will be essential for informing and guiding efforts to safeguard the natural ecosystems that provide the Earth’s life support systems. Without the baseline data of faunistic and taxonomic diversity providing means for the identification of the species in a region, no one can move forward in properly planning their conservation or their control in case of invasive species.

Fast development of modern research techniques, which flourished at the end of 20th century, slightly diminished interest in faunistic research. On the other hand, the negative impact on ecosystems, including threats from human activity that causes habitat destruction and modification in the face of the global biodiversity crisis and climate change, led to an urgent need for significant intensification of biodiversity studies.

The Conference emphasizes the importance of faunistic research that includes studies into the nature of insect fauna: from sampling, species identification and regional biodiversity inventory, evaluation of species abundance, documentation of described species (morphology incl. variability, bionomics incl. life cycles and habitats) and description of new taxa to taxonomic, phylogenetic, trophic, chorological and other analyses of regional and global faunas.

The research postulated in the Conference involves a large-scale investigation of various groups of insects, which, in spite of their tremendous economic importance, constitute one of the world’s least known faunas and for which there has been a disturbing decline of qualified specialists.

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The Conference brought together international academics from the Baltic countries and Poland (speakers from other countries were also welcomed), including professors and graduate, master or postgraduate (doctoral/PhD) students, which presented methodological novelties and faunistic research in their respective fields.

The first aim of the Conference was to provide opportunities for academics from various countries representing a range of disciplines in entomology to share their research by means of the conference podium.

The Conference’s second aim was to provide opportunities for academics to receive informal in-depth feedback through discussions and enable them to establish contact with professionals from other countries and institutions.

Number of given presentations:
Italy – 2, Czech Republic – 1, Poland – 6, Lithuania – 15, Latvia – 6, Russia – 1, Canada – 2, USA – 4; Ecuador – 1.

Number of participants who provided presentations:
Italy – 2, Czech Republic – 2, Poland – 8, Lithuania – 18, Latvia – 8, Russia – 1, Canada – 4, USA – 3; Ecuador – 1.
SELECTED ABSTRACTS and PAPERS

(Peer-reviewed)
CONTENTS

Aphid (Hemiptera, Sternorrhyncha: Aphidoidea) fauna of Lithuania: current state of knowledge. By Rimantas Rakauskas (Vilnius University, Vilnius, Lithuania) / 9

The first record of Stigmella mallella (Lepidoptera, Nepticulidae), an apple tree pest in Kurtuvėnai (NW Lithuania). By Anna Karlsone, Janis Strautinš (Daugavpils University, Latvia), Justyna Patrycja Rudak, Kornelia Cypryjanska (Wrocław University of Environmental and Life Sciences, Wrocław, Poland), Romualdas Šopoka (Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences, Vilnius, Lithuania) / 11

Evolution of the weevil rostrum (Coleoptera: Curculionoidea): internal structure and evolutionary trends. By Steve R. Davis (Natural History Museum, University of Kansas, USA) / 13

Global issues of biodiversity. By Greta Pastorino, Alex Borrini (Genoa University, Italy) / 18

The first discovery of the rare species Enteucha acetosae (Lepidoptera, Nepticulidae) in the Kurtuvėnai Regional Park. By Anna Patrycja Chrachol (Wrocław University of Environmental and Life Sciences, Wrocław, Poland), Tatjana Makevič (Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences, Vilnius, Lithuania), Agata Malecka (Wrocław University of Environmental and Life Sciences, Wrocław, Poland), Tautvydas Kirtiklis (Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences, Vilnius, Lithuania), Jekaterina Voskresenska (Daugavpils University, Daugavpils, Latvia) / 21

Recent faunistic and taxonomic studies of mining moths from the Bucculatricidae and Gracillariidae families (Lepidoptera) in Russia. By Svetlana Baryshnikova (Zoological Institute, Russian Academy of Sciences, St. Petersburg, Russia) / 23

First discovery of leaf-mining Nepticulidae and Tischeriidae (Lepidoptera) associated with the Chilean endemic genus Podanthis Lag. (Asteraceae) as a host-plant. By Arūnas Diškus, Jonas R. Stonis (Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences, Vilnius, Lithuania) & Nixon Cumbucitos Torres (Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja, Ecuador) / 30

Study methods of Nepticulidae: micro-mounts of genitalia structures. By Jonas Rimantas Stonis, Arūnas Diškus (Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences, Vilnius, Lithuania), Andrius Remeikis (Nature Research Centre, Vilnius, Lithuania), Asta Navickaitė (Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences, Vilnius, Lithuania) / 32

Short review of sampling methods used in applied entomology. By Jackie Jackowski & Jacek Twardowski (Wrocław University of Environmental and Life Sciences, Wrocław, Poland) / 36

Fomoria weaveri (Lepidoptera, Nepticulidae), an interesting Nepticulidae species in the Kurtuvėnai Regional Park (Lithuania). By Juris Piklis (Daugavpils University, Daugavpils, Latvia), Ligita Šlapelytė, Dovilė Masalskaitė (Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences, Vilnius, Lithuania), Marcin Cierpisz (Wrocław University of Environmental and Life Sciences, Wrocław, Poland) / 41

Some data on Macrolepidoptera from the Kurtuvėnai Regional Park. By Dalius Dapkus, Tatjana Makevič (Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences, Vilnius, Lithuania) / 43

Systematics of carpenter moths (Lepidoptera: Cossidae) and the discovery of new lepidopteran glands. By Steve R. Davis (Snow Hall University of Kansas, USA) / 45
Study methods of beetles of the genus *Hylobius* and related mycobionta. By Donatas Stanionis (Lithuanian Research Centre for Agriculture and Forestry, Institute of Forestry, Kaunas, Lithuania) / 48

Revised fauna of the Nepticulidae (Lepidoptera) of continental East Asia: lots of effort to elucidate the little-known diversity of pygmy moths. By Agnė Rocienė & Jonas Rimantas Stonis (Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences, Vilnius, Lithuania) / 51

How good are the ground beetles (Coleoptera, Carabidae) as indicators of biodiversity in the example of the Kurtuvenai Regional Park, Lithuania. By Jacek Twardowski, Jacek Jackowski (Wrocław University of Environmental and Life Sciences, Wroclaw, Poland) & Raimonds Cibuļškis (Daugavpils University, Daugavpils, Latvia) / 63

The first photographic documentation and new data on *Enteucha guajavae* (Lepidoptera, Nepticulidae), a pest of guava from equatorial America. By Andrius Remeikis (Nature Research Centre, Vilnius, Lithuania), Jonas R. Stonis, Arūnas Diškus (Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences, Vilnius, Lithuania) & Donald R. Davis (National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., USA) / 65

Lithuanian Entomological Society: activities, challenges and prospects. By Andrius Petrašiūnas (Lithuanian Entomological Society and Vilnius University, Vilnius, Lithuania) / 75

Genetic polymorphism at the cytochrome oxidase I gene: application in biosystematics of aphids. By Jurga Turčinavičienė (Vilnius University, Vilnius, Lithuania) / 77

The leaf-mining Lepidoptera of Central Asia: 18-year anniversary of the first revised checklist. By Nurgozel Saparmamedova (Toronto, Canada / formerly Institute of Zoology, Turkmenian Academy of Sciences, Asghabat, Turkmenistan), Jonas Rimantas Stonis, Arūnas Diškus, Remigijus Noreika & Virginijus Sruoga (Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences, Vilnius, Lithuania) / 78

Fauna and biogeography of Chrysomelidae sensu lato (Insecta: Coleoptera) of Latvia. By Andris Bujejs (Formerly Daugavpils University, Daugavpils, Latvia) / 82

Lepidopteran diversity and phylogeny: 15 years ago and now. By M. Alma Solis (Smithsonian Institution / United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C., USA) / 85

*Paralobesia cyripediana* (Lepidoptera, Tortricidae): a stealthy micromoth attacking *Cypripedium reginae* (Orchidaceae). By Jean-François Landry (Canadian National Collection of Insects, Arachnids, and Nematodes, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Ottawa, Canada), Marilyn H. S. Light & Michael MacConaill (Gatineau, Québec, Canada) / 90

First faunistic data of the Nepticulidae fauna (Lepidoptera) of northwestern Lithuania. By Justine Zaberga, Liva Legzdina (Daugavpils University, Daugavpils, Latvia), Wojciech Otfinowski (Wrocław University of Environmental and Life Sciences, Wroclaw, Poland) & Žygimantas Obelevičius (Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences, Vilnius, Lithuania) / 92

What is new and most interesting about the Nepticulidae of the Crimea and Lithuania. By Asta Navickaitė, Arūnas Diškus & Jonas Rimantas Stonis (Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences, Vilnius, Lithuania) / 96

Checklist of moths and butterflies of the Czech Republic (Insecta: Lepidoptera). By Zdeněk Laštůvka & Jan Liška (Mendel University, Brno, Czech Republic) / 118

The wetlands of Zeri: flora, vegetation and amphibian population of Peloso Lake (Toscany, Italy). By Alex Borrini (Genoa University, Genoa, Italy) / 121
Leaf-beetles, represented by 30,000–50,000 species, are one of the largest families of the order Coleoptera worldwide (Bieńkowski, 2004; Jolivet, 1988; Mohr, 1966). The family is also abundant and rich in species in the fauna of Latvia and in the other Baltic States. They are phytophagous: adults mostly occur on leaves and flowers, larvae mostly feed on leaves and roots, occasionally larvae are saprophagous or carpophagous. Some species of leaf-beetles are considered to be serious pests in agriculture and forestry.

The research history of Latvian Chrysomelidae is more than 220 years old (Bukejs, 2008). The first information on leaf-beetles of Latvian fauna was published in the second half of the 18th century in the monograph describing nature of Livland (Fischer, 1778) where three species are mentioned. More than 170 works were published in Latvia subsequently.

The Latvian fauna of leaf-beetles includes 326 species (Bukejs, 2013) belonging to 3 families (Megalopodidae, Orsodacnidae and Chrysomelidae) and 13 subfamilies (Zeugophorinae, Orsodacninae, Bruchinae, Donaciinae, Criocerinae, Cassidinae, Chrysomelinae, Galerucinae, Alticinae, Lamprosomatinae, Cryptocephalinae (incl. Clytrini and Cryptocephalini), Eumolpinae, Synetinae). In Latvian fauna, Megalopodidae and Orsodacnidae contain a small number of species – 5 and 1 respectively, but Chrysomelidae is one of the largest in number of species families of Coleoptera and contains 320 species. The subfamilies Alticinae (125 species), Chrysomelinae (57 species), Cryptocephalinae (incl. Clytrini and Cryptocephalini; 42 species) and Donaciinae (27 species) are predominate.

The Latvian fauna of leaf-beetles is represented by 17 chorotypes (Bukejs, 2012): Cosmopolitan – 4 species (1.23%), Holarctic-Oriental – 1 species (0.31%), Palaearctic-Oriental – 2 species (0.61%), Holarctic – 15 species (4.60%), Palaearctic – 45 species (13.80%), West-Palaearctic – 11 species (3.37%), Asiatic-European – 65 species (19.94%), Siberian-European – 74 species (22.70%), Centralasiatic-Euro-Mediterranean – 23 species (7.06%), Centralasiatic-European – 17 species (5.21%), Turanian-Euro-Mediterranean – 3 species (0.92%), Turanian-European – 13 species (3.99%), European-Mediterranean – 9 species (2.76%), European – 28 species (8.59%), Central-European – 14 species (4.29%), North-European – 1 species (0.31%), and East-European – 1 species (0.31%).
Figure 1. Leaf-beetles: A – *Cassida nebulosa* Linnaeus; B – *Donacia semicuprea* Panzer; C – *Cryptocephalus sericeus* (Linnaeus).
REFERENCES


Figure 2. Leaf-beetles: A – Gonioctena viminalis (Linnaeus); B – Galerucella nymphaeae (Linnaeus); C – Chrysomela populi Linnaeus; D – Leptinotarsa decemlineata (Say).