

# TORTS

Newsletter of the  
Troop of Reputed Tortricid Systematists

## **MOVE PLANNED FOR LEPIDOPTERA COLLECTION AT THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM, LONDON**

If you live in a cave and have not heard, the Lepidoptera Collection at The Natural History Museum will soon be moved to temporary quarters. Here are details that were included in an e-mail from Quentin Wheeler.

“The Department of Entomology at the Natural History Museum, London, is in the planning stages of its largest move in more than half a century. The present Entomology building will be razed to make way for the landmark Darwin Centre II on the same site, scheduled for completion in 2008. The new building will house the Entomology collections and portions of the Herbarium in vastly improved environmental conditions. There will also be state-of-the-art research and public access spaces. We are currently in the midst of a six-month planning process to ensure that the current Entomology building is vacated no later than September 2005.

Although the collections “decant” will probably not commence until about March 2005, preparations for the removal are already well under way and portions of the move may happen sooner. The Entomology library may begin its move and become inaccessible to

external visitors as early as January 2005 and until its move into temporary facilities is complete. As you might imagine, these preparations are placing an enormous extra burden upon our staff. During the period of the decant (until approximately 1 September 2005) we cannot guarantee access to or loans of specific parts of the collection. That said, we are making every effort to minimise the impact of the move on your work, as well as our own research, curation and education programmes. We will attempt to honour as many requests for loans, information and visits as we can, but this may not be possible in every case or on specific dates. You should plan your research and travel accordingly and co-ordinate your arrangements with a member of our staff. It may also be difficult during the actual move for staff to answer questions that require access to the collections or library; this may lead to significant delays.

We anticipate that a timetable for the “decant” will be in place by January 2005, detailing the sequence of removal of collections and programmes and their arrival in temporary housing at several locations in London. Temporary housing for the collections is being designed to permit as full access as possible. However, until a timetable has been adopted, it is impossible to say with certainty when particular taxa will be unavailable.

We apologise for any inconvenience and ask for your forbearance and co-operation as we undertake this historic move. With 28,000,000 specimens, one of the largest libraries in the world, and about 130 staff members, you will appreciate the challenge we are facing.”

Thanks to Kevin Tuck for forwarding this message to us.

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## **TORTRICID CATALOG FINALLY AT THE PRINTER**

The catalog of the Tortricidae - World Catalogue of Insects, Volume 5 - is finally at the printer! It should be available from Apollo Books by about the first of March 2005. The catalog treats over 9,100 valid species and over 15,000 names; it is 741 pages in length. The price is DKK 960,00 or about \$175 US. It can be order at “[apollobooks@vip.cybercity.dk](mailto:apollobooks@vip.cybercity.dk)”. The catalog is intended to be complete through 2004, although there undoubtedly will be some omissions - near the end, the cut-off point for the inclusion of new information became a moving target.

The catalog eventually will be made available via the web - probably several years in the future. Hence, we solicit corrections and comments for its improvement. If you find errors in citations or spelling, or know the whereabouts of types that we have overlooked, we would appreciate receiving that information.

We hope the catalog will provide a firm foundation for future systematic work on Tortricidae. And I hope that this is the first of many projects on the family in which we can successfully enlist collaborators from the tortricid community throughout the world.

## **PROGRESS ON AFRICAN OLETHREUTINAE BY AARVIK**

The tortricid fauna of tropical Africa is undoubtedly the most poorly known of any major biogeographic realm. Although the work of Diakonoff (1959, 1960, 1961, 1963, 1973, 1981, etc.) represents a useful generic framework for many species based on the fauna of Madagascar, it provides only a glimpse into the real diversity of the African continent. Many African species still reside in the genera in which Meyrick and others described them nearly a century ago, and many species remained to be described.

Heppner (1991) estimated that were 250 described species of tortricids in the Afro-tropical region, but the number is probably closer to 500 if the fauna of Madagascar is included. Most other major biogeographic realms support about 1,000 species of tortricids, and there is no reason to believe that the Afrotropical fauna will not be comparable.

In recent years, Leif Aarvik has focused his efforts toward this region, and these efforts are beginning to pay off in a big way. In two papers published in 2004, Aarvik (2004a, b) described 7 new genera and 19 new species, and proposed several new synonymies and new combinations. The second of the two papers, treating the subtribe Neopotamiae, is an impressive revision, over 50 pages in length, with excellent photographs of male and female genitalia and superb, large color drawings of the adults skillfully prepared by Nini Cecilie Aarvik.

It is encouraging to see progress on this fauna, and we can only hope that Leif continues to focus on this incredibly diverse and poorly known region.

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## INSIGHT INTO WALKER GENERIC NAMES

The following is a letter to Gaden Robinson (BMNH) from Robert Horae.

“I have just stumbled on something I thought you (and others at the BM) might appreciate, though perhaps you know it already (in which case, apologies). Having always assumed that Walker's generic names were by and large complete invented nonsense (as I believe Meyrick complained), I chanced on the fact that Izatha (Oecophoridae, New Zealand) is an obsolete place name used by Ptolemy on his ancient map of the world. It took a while to find a web-site that showed the location of Izatha, and it turns out to be North Africa. I was delighted to see that amongst other localities in the vicinity we have the following: Celama, Garra, Thisizima, Thudaca, Ladbia, Chezala, Bida, Zaratha, Casmara, Binsitta, and Tenissa (=Tinissa?). I presume there are other Walker names elsewhere on the map, in other parts of the world. See Ptolemy's map of Libya at [http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Gazetteer/Periods/Roman/\\_Texts/Ptolemy/4/2\\*.htm#ImageMapLocation](http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Gazetteer/Periods/Roman/_Texts/Ptolemy/4/2*.htm#ImageMapLocation).”

Thanks to Kevin Tuck for sharing this letter with us.

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## TORTS NEWSLETTER TO BE DISTRIBUTED AS PDF

Starting in July 2005, I hope to distribute the newsletter electronically as a PDF. Hence, please make sure I have a correct e-mail address for you. I also hope we can distribute PDFs of recently published articles on Tortricidae in this manner. Thanks much.

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