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PREFACE

XV International Symposium on Enchytraeidae 2025 in Brno, Czech Republic

Newsletter on Enchytraeidae No. 16

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This special issue is devoted to the 15th International Symposium on Enchytraeidae (ISE) held on the 2nd to 5th of July 2025 in Brno, Czechia, at the Masaryk University's Faculty of Science, Department of Botany and Zoology, and hosted by myself, thus also the guest editor of this volume.

Having developed from smaller meetings of enchytraeid researchers that started out in the 1980s with the Enchytraeidae subgroup of the "Working Group on Soil Mesofauna" in Germany, the International Symposium on Enchytraeidae had been held every two years from 1994 to 2018. After the very well attended 2018 symposium in Saint-Syr-l'École near Paris, France (organised by Céline Pelosi), the next one was scheduled for 2020, but was then postponed due to the health concerns and travel restrictions connected to the Covid-19 pandemic. It took place four years later in 2022 in Kraków, Poland (organised by Agnieszka Józefowska). The next and hitherto last one, held after another three years, was the 15th ISE in Brno. It was attended by 19 participants (Fig. 1) – from master's students to senior researchers – from 11 countries, ranging from Spain to South Korea and from Finland to Greece (when counting current affiliations; when counting nationalities, also 11 countries, though not fully identical). Of those, five attended only on-line. Seventeen talks were given (Fig. 2) and five posters presented (Figs 3–4). Those participants, who were able to come in person, took also part in a social dinner, a one-day excursion to the Podyjí (Dyje or Thaya river valley) National Park (Figs 1, 5, 6), including the study sites of Dusík and Schlaghamerský (article in this volume) and in an identification workshop (Figs 7–9) led by Rüdiger Schmelz (foremost) and myself. Some participants even continued after the official end with a morning session at the microscope on Sunday the 6th of July.

Alongside the development of collaboration and meetings of enchytraeid researchers outlined above, a publication series named "Newsletter on Enchytraeidae" was established. From its issue No. 4, the proceedings of the ISE's, starting with the very first one in 1994, were published under this name. Later, these proceedings were often published as special issues of scientific journals to increase accessibility for a wider readership. In these cases, the Newsletter on Enchytraeidae and its consecutive numbering were kept as a subtitle to maintain the established tradition. This was also the case for the three proceedings of the ISE published in Soil Organisms so far (in 2009, 2013 and 2015). However, there was no proceedings volume and thus no Newsletter on Enchytraeidae from the last two meetings (2018 and 2022). Thus the last Newsletter on Enchytraeidae was No. 15, representing the proceedings of the 12th ISE, held in 2016 in Tihany, Hungary (organised by Gergely Boros),

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which was published on-line in Opuscula Zoologica (Budapest) in 2017. As the organiser of the 2025 meeting, I am happy to take up this tradition.

Almost all research papers included in this issue are based on contributions presented at the 2025 symposium. One exception is the taxonomic update on enchytraeid genera and species. Notably, the first issue of the Newsletter on Enchytraeidae (Dózsa-Farkas, Graefe & Römbke 1985) consisted solely of a checklist of new enchytraeid taxa and the addresses of the authors of the species descriptions. Once the Newsletter transitioned into a series of ISE proceedings, a taxonomic update (for many years authored by Rüdiger M. Schmelz) became a core feature of most subsequent issues.

I would like to thank those, who contributed to this issue of the 'Newsletter on Enchytraeidae'. I am grateful to the the editors-in-chief of Soil Organisms, Nico Eisenhauer and Anton Potapov, as well as the technical editor, Jacqueline Gitschmann, for their trust and support. I also wish to thank my faculty and department for their support in organising the ISE in Brno, especially the head of department, Jan Zukal, as well as Jiří Rozehnal, Stanislav Němejc, and Daniel Dusík for their technical assistance.

The next ISE is planned for 2027, to be organised by Nicole Scheunemann in Görlitz, Germany.

Jiří (George) Schlaghamerský



Figure 1. Participants of the ISE 2025 during the excursion (4 July 2025); from left to right, kneeling (lower row): Gergely Boros, Jiří Schlaghamerský, Rüdiger Schmelz; standing (upper row): Dóra Selmeczi, Hyejeong Kim, Nicole Scheunemann, Maxim Degtyarev with his wife Tatiana Davidyuk, Wiktoria Ogar, Thi Hong Van Tran, Ida Pohjanlehto, Anneke Beylich, Łukasz Gajda, and Daniel Dusík. Not on the photograph (on-line participation): Martina Bílková, Christina Chalkia, Agnieszka Józefowska, Tatiana Kondratieva, Céline Pelosi, and Giles Ross (photograph Stanislav Němejc).



Figure 2. Participants listening to the lecture of Ida Pohjanlehto (3 July 2025; photograph Jiří Schlaghamerský).

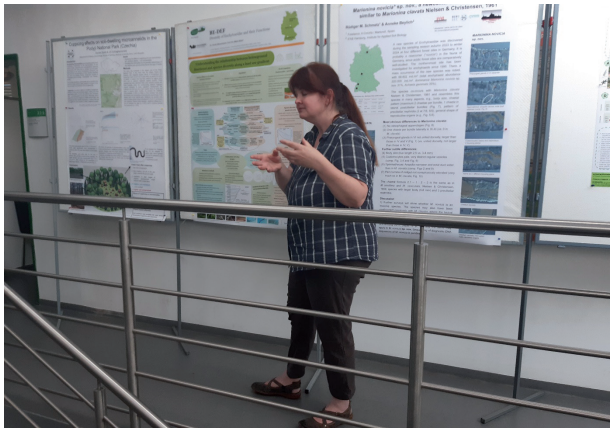


Figure 3. Nicole Scheunemann introducing her poster during the poster session (2 July 2025; photograph Jiří Schlaghamerský).



Figure 4. Participants listening to Nicole Scheunemann's introduction to her poster (2 July 2025; photograph Jiří Schlaghamerský).



Figure 5. Participants standing in the dried out bed of Daníž brook in the Podyjí NP during the excursion (4 July 2025; photograph Jiří Schlaghamerský).



Figure 6. Participants having lunch during the excursion (4 July 2025; photograph Jiří Schlaghamerský).



Figure 7. Participants listening to the introductory talk of Rüdiger Schmelz during the identification workshop (5 July 2025; photograph Jiří Schlaghamerský).



Figure 8. Participants listening to the introductory talk of Rüdiger Schmelz during the identification workshop (5 July 2025; photograph Jiří Schlaghamerský.



Figure 9. Participants identifying live enchytraeids during the identification workshop (5 July 2025; photograph Anneke Beylich).