

Research Highlights

ZHANG, Y. & BARCLAY, M.V.L. 2021. *Faunitaxys* 9(22): 1–5.

Summary: A remarkable new species of large cerambycid with a flightless female is discovered, based on material collected in the Solomon Islands in 1965 by Penny and John Greenslade.



Psalidococtus satori, the second species of a rare island genus: female collected 1965 by P.J.M. Greenslade.

In memoriam

Dr Brian Roy Pitkin 1945-2021

Brian joined the NHM in 1964, initially in the “Setting Room” (as all new starters did in those days) before starting to work on Thysanoptera (thrips). He was appointed as technical assistant to Laurence Mound in 1965 and while working with him on thrips, produced many publications, which continue to be used to this day. Following on from thrips, Brian undertook a specific project on Collembola, combining studies in the Department and at Birkbeck College, and in 1979 was awarded an equivalent to a Master’s degree for his project on the *Onychiurus armatus* group of Collembola. The success of this led to a move to Diptera (specifically Sphaeroceridae, Lesser Dung Flies) in 1980 and it was on this family that Brian gained his PhD and DIC from Imperial college in 1986. Brian later became Systems and Data Manager for the Department of Entomology, overseeing its IT and working on databasing projects, particularly as a member of the teams that developed the *Butterflies and Moths of the World: Generic Names and their Type Species* (<https://www.nhm.ac.uk/our-science/data/butmoth/search>) and *The Global Lepidoptera Names Index* (LepIndex) (<https://www.nhm.ac.uk/our-science/data/lepindex/>). Brian’s last big task before retirement was, as Systems and Data Analyst, setting up the Entomology collections management databasing system using KE Emu. Brian retired in 2006 and became a Scientific Associate. He continued work from home on *The Leaf and Stem Mines of British Flies and other Insects* (<https://www.ukflymines.co.uk/>), a project he began while working on Diptera. Brian also took a slight sidestep after retirement to join the Surrey Botanical Society. He and his wife Dr Linda Pitkin (former staff) were regulars at indoor and field meetings, and perhaps inevitably Brian was persuaded to apply his website and databasing experience to take over the running of the SBS’s website, as well as producing regular updates of the Surrey vascular plant distribution map during the intense 2010-2019 recording period and setting up the Society’s Facebook group. Brian was also a superb diver and underwater photographer, well known, loved and respected in that community. He passed away on 31st August, aged 75. He will be remembered for his kindness and patience, always willing to work to make that of others easier and will be sorely missed by all who knew him.



Words by Dr Ian Kitching with contributions from Dr Linda Pitkin.

In memoriam

Dr Brian Pitkin – the Thysanopterist

I joined the Museum staff in January 1964, and Brian was appointed as my technical assistant about a year later. Although his main task was preparing thrips onto microscope slides, he was actively encouraged to take an interest in these insects and to learn about their structural diversity and biology. His first publication was in 1970 and involved some new records to the British thrips fauna. But two years later Brian published two substantial revisionary studies, one on a European genus of thrips living in pea flowers, and the other on a related Australian genus. In 1973 he published a particularly important revision of a very different genus from Australia, and quickly followed this with an account of the species of that same genus from India. He made important contributions as one of the co-authors of the 1976 Handbook to British Thysanoptera, and after field studies in East Africa he published two further papers on tropical thrips. As a result of a visit to the USNM in Washington he produced a very useful summary of the 1000 thrips taxa described by J.D. Hood, including new lectotype designations. Brian's final thrips publication was a revision of another large genus from Australia, but by then he was being encouraged to acquire further academic training. He agreed to take the equivalent of a Master's degree at Birkbeck College in London, involving an investigation into the structural variation of a common species of Collembola. Success in that project led to him accepting a transfer to "the third floor" and thus his subsequent career as a respected dipterist.



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Words by Dr Laurence Mound

Fernando Angelini 1948-2021

An affiliate researcher at the Università degli Studi della Basilicata, Italy, famous expert on world Leiodidae (round fungus beetles) and great specialist on Italian beetle fauna, and author of more than 100 scientific papers including world revision of the genus *Agathidium* Panzer, during his scientific career Fernando described over 600 taxa new to science. His impressive collection of ~500,000 specimens of ~38,000 species of Coleoptera was donated some years ago to the Museum of Zoology and Natural History "La Specola" in Florence, Italy, one of the oldest scientific museums in Europe which opened its doors in 1775. <https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Fernando-Angelini>

Words by Dr Dmitry Telnov

Jiri Zidek 1938-2021

Well-known coleopterist of Czech origin, famous specialist on scarab beetles, author of more than 100 scientific papers. His comprehensive collection was kindly donated to the NHM.

Words by Dr Dmitry Telnov

