

Professor Dr Max Beier, 1903-1979

For all, and particularly for Austrian arachnologists, 1979 was an unfortunate, may I say, a sad year: three eminent colleagues died within a few months of each other: W. Bristowe, H. Nemenz and M. Beier.

With the death of Max Beier we lost not only a distinguished arachnologist and entomologist but also a helpful and warm hearted colleague. He was always on hand for help and useful discussion. In spite of, or perhaps because of his very diverse interests and knowledge of morphology, physiology and systematics in widely different animal groups he was of stimulating modesty. He will be greatly missed by all of those who have known him and have appreciated his quiet politeness and positive attitude towards his fellow arachnologists.

Max Beier was born in Spittal an der Drau (Carinthia) on 6 April 1903. Owing to the profession of his father (engineer) he frequently changed schools and for a short period attended the secondary school in Innsbruck, my home town. In 1923 he entered the University of Vienna where he read zoology, finishing his studies with a Doctor of Philosophy degree in 1927. In the same year he began working at the Vienna Natural History Museum, initially on beetles and their larvae. However, after only one year in this institution he published his first paper on pseudoscorpions. It was quite by chance that he took up this group of arachnids. While tidying up his laboratory he fell upon a jar of unidentified false scorpions which had been there for quite a time. He undertook the task of identifying them and the interest aroused on this occasion continued to pursue him throughout his life. Only four years after his first publication on this group he published, in two volumes, the pseudoscorpion fauna of the world which remains, together with the synopsis of this order by Chamberlin (published in the same year), the basic work for all interested in pseudoscorpions.

During the early years of his scientific activity he organised several collecting trips to Greece, Yugoslavia and Sicily, often accompanied by his wife Irmgard whom he married in 1931. It was in 1962 that he visited the region of Aswan (Nubian Sudan) before the region was inundated, and his last trip was to Turkey. He was named Director of the Zoological



Prof. Dr Max Beier working in the Geneva Museum, October 1973. Photo: B. Hauser

Department of the Vienna Museum in 1962, retiring officially six years later. However he continued his scientific activity with the same characteristic fervour up to his unexpected death on 6 July 1979.

During more than half a century of scientific activity he produced a steady stream of papers, approximately half of them (252) devoted to pseudoscorpions. Much of our knowledge on geographical distribution, systematics and to a lesser degree also biology is a direct result of these publications. Although not neglecting the (necessary) single descriptions, Max Beier always endeavoured to summarize his results in monographs with identification keys to facilitate the study of pseudoscorpions for beginners. I only need mention here the monographs of the pseudoscorpion fauna of Europe, Chile, South Africa and New Zealand. I would be doing injustice to Max Beier's scientific merits if I did not also mention his extensive interests and activity among other groups of arthropods. He published monographs on Suctoria, Heteroptera, Homoptera and Pseudoscorpiones in Kükenthal's *Handbuch der Zoologie*; in Bronn's *Klassen und Ordnungen des Tierreichs* he treated the Embioidea, Orthopteroidea and Blattopteroidea, and all these publications are far from being simple compilations. His indispensable papers on Mantodea (*Genera Insectorum* – Mantidae) and his revision of the Pseudophyllinae are two further examples of his diversified capacity. As editor of the *Orthopterorum Catalogus* and the new edition of the volume on insects in the *Handbuch der*

Zoologie he spent much time editing the typescripts.

Besides other honours Max Beier received the Fabricius medal from the German Entomological Society in January 1967 and was awarded an honorary doctorate of the University of Innsbruck in July 1968.

I am personally deeply indebted to Professor Beier, as it was he who encouraged me with admirable patience during my first steps in pseudoscorpion taxonomy. He made several journeys to the Museum at Geneva to lay the foundations of a well identified pseudoscorpion collection. During these visits I dis-

covered the personality of Max Beier as he will continue to live in my memory: an eminent but nevertheless discreet and helpful scientist with the ability to coordinate minor results and fit them into the great framework of nature's puzzle.

A first list of his publications appeared in *Annln naturh.Mus.Wien* 72: 3-19 (1968) on the occasion of his 65th birthday, and an obituary with a complete list will be published in the same journal, vol. 83 (1980).

Volker Mahnert

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***Bristowiella* new name for *Bristowia* Saaristo, 1978 (Araneae: Lycosidae)**

Michael I. Saaristo

University of Turku,
Department of Zoology,
SF-20500 Turku 50, Finland

In a paper published recently (Saaristo, 1978) the author erected the genus *Bristowia* for *Pardosa seychellensis* Bristowe, 1973. The name *Bristowia*,

however, has been used earlier for a salticid genus (Reimoser, 1934) as kindly pointed out by several colleagues. Thus *Bristowia* Saaristo, 1978 is a junior homonym of *Bristowia* Reimoser, 1934 and must be rejected. Therefore a new name *Bristowiella* is hereby proposed to replace *Bristowia* Saaristo, 1978.

References

- REIMOSER, E. 1934: The spiders of Krakatau. *Proc.zool. Soc. Lond.* 1934 (1): 13-18.
SAARISTO, M. I. 1978: Spiders (Arachnida, Araneae) from the Seychelle Islands, with notes on taxonomy. *Ann.Zool.Fenn.* 15: 99-126.