



Bündner Naturmuseum
Museo della natura dei Grigioni
Museum da la natira dal Grischun

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First international brainstorming of researchers interested in *Limacidae sensu stricto*

8. – 10. September 2006, CH-7000 Chur, Switzerland

Bündner Naturmuseum, Masanserstrasse 31

Current research with methods of molecular biology (Dipl. Biol. B. Klee-ZSM) as well as observations of mating behaviour in the field (M. + G. Falkner; R. Heim-NMLU; U. Schneppat-BNM) have shown that within the genus *Limax sensu lato* there are many unsolved taxonomic problems and many more species than previously believed! In addition, there is no real understanding of the relationships among the members of Limacidae or of the higher-level position of the family.

During the last meeting of FRIEDRICH HELD GESELLSCHAFT in Stuttgart, 3. – 5. March 2006, a little group of already deeply involved researchers decided to organize a brainstorming as a first step towards a better understanding between researchers and to improve coordination of projects in this field.

The problems are so manifold that we do not want to hold this workshop as part of a larger meeting or congress. We prefer the idea of a familiar scene where a small group of experts can form a “think-tank”, and where we can speak confidently and with freedom about our shared research interests. We also need to outline the areas of highest need for research in the near future. This meeting is planned to be the first of many as part of a long-term collaboration.

In Stuttgart we agreed to hold the first brainstorming session in Switzerland, in a local but active Museum. In addition, we can all enjoy collecting these amazing slugs at night in the picturesque alpine location!

To plan the schedule of this meeting I need to know what your contribution will be as soon as possible! This can be in the form of a presentation or a shared discussion. Following you will find some suggestions about topics which we think should be urgently discussed for better coordination, progress and quality in our research.

- 1. External morphological characters.** What is variability within and between species? Polychromism- facts and doubts about its existence. Possible distinguishing criteria for determination in the field. Methods and standards of description. Value of these characters.
- 2. Anatomical differences.** What are the best characters for distinguishing species? Methods and standards of dissection. Urgent need of education in this field. Methods and standards of documentation.
- 3. Structure of penes.** Methods in researching external structure of everted penes. Methods in researching internal structure of non everted penes. Value of these characters.
- 4. Mating behaviour.** New results in this topic. Methods in the field as well in captivity. Value of results.
- 5. Molecular biology.** New results in this topic. Value and meaning of results.

6. **Collecting and preserving.** Standards in relaxing, narcotizing, fixation, preservation, labelling, storing, cataloguing, etc.. Availability of specimens in collections, types and type localities and the need for a central archive as well as the need for series of neotypes. Central archive of collections worldwide.
7. **Literature.** Availability of original literature concerning this genus. Increasing access to translations of the old publications via the internet. (Many misunderstandings in current taxonomy are based on the lack of rare papers and non availability of correct translations.)
8. **Contact.** Central availability of contact addresses concerning this field of research. Increased communication between researchers. Avoidance of overlapping topics and coordination of complementary research. (The whole is more than the sum of the parts!)
9. More topics can be added by participants!

This invitation will be sent to:

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Please let me know of any more researchers who should be invited. Please also tell me if you are coming and if appropriate, what your contribution will be as soon as possible. This will make this brainstorming a successful contact of researchers in this very special group of organisms!

With best regards

Ulrich E. Schnepapat

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