More than 40 years of excellence: the outstanding contribution of the South African Edward A. Ueckermann to acarology

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Acarology has been a very active area of research in South Africa for many years, especially with reference to taxonomy. For this reason, mites of agricultural importance are well known in that country compared to many other countries. Edward A. Ueckermann is a South African acarologist who has contributed enormously to knowledge about the mites of his country, as well as from many other countries around the world. Eddie, as he is called by his friends, is an admirable man, both for his enviable professional qualities and for his tremendous personality. The authors of this brief biography are glad to have had the opportunity to collaborate with Eddie as authors of several publications51, 52, 58, 70, 75, 80, 87, 92, 95, 101,103, 104, 107, 112, 114, 117, 121, 143, 151, 160, 189, 203, 207, 211, and to interact with him in many other ways.

Eddie was born in Postmasburg, Northern Cape Province, South Africa, on 19 January 1951. He completed secondary school in his hometown and after a year of compulsory military training, Eddie enrolled at North-West University, Potchefstroom, in 1971 to study a B.Sc. degree majoring in Zoology and Botany, which he obtained in 1973. He then continued at the same institution to pursue his MSc degree in Zoology, awarded in 1977. In February 1976, he joined the Agricultural Research Council - Plant Protection Research Institute (ARC-PPRI) in Pretoria as a research officer. His first project at that institute involved the study of spider mite pests on cotton.

After just six months, he was offered employment as a taxonomist, specializing in the predatory mite family Phytoseiidae. His research on this topic was submitted towards a D.Sc. in Zoology at the North-West University, awarded in 1983. To complement his knowledge on mite taxonomy, Eddie