Evert E. Lindquist’s approach to the taxonomic impediment in Acarology: Diversity in specialization through 60 years of systematics research and beyond

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Born precisely 72 years after Antonio Berlese, on 26 June 1935, Evert Esplin Lindquist continues to have a profound influence on acarology globally. His ~60-year career significantly strengthened the foundations of acarology through his skills as a systematist, his exceptional attention to detail, his broad curiosity as a biologist, and his dedication to sharing his knowledge through enlightening publications and keen mentoring. Evert Lindquist is also much more than the sum of his acarological career. He is a friend and colleague to most of us, an altruistic scientist, and a cherished collaborator.

Systematics research on Acari

Lindquist is the world’s most renowned authority on Ascidae sensu lato (now divided into Ascidae, Melicharidae and Blattisocidae), as well as a world expert on Heterostigmata, especially Tarsonomiidae. This broad expertise began developing over 60 years ago, when he was a student at the University of California, Berkeley, from which he later graduated (B.Sc. 1957, M.Sc. 1959, Ph.D. 1963). He attributes his interest in acarology to his involvement in an undergraduate project on an analysis of soil invertebrate samples from Barrow, Alaska, where he was “exposed to the entire diversity of free-living mites from the Barrow area, took the acarology course presented by A. Earl Pritchard, and became fascinated with Acari” (E. E. Lindquist, pers. comm. 2011). This led to his first publication in 1961, on the taxonomy and biology of Arctoseius (Ascidae) from Barrow1, followed in the same year by a publication on the taxonomy and biology of Tarsonemoides (Tarsonomiidae) parasitizing bark beetle eggs2. In these publications on two contrasting acarine...