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Special Issue: Proceedings of the 8th International Conference on Nemertean Biology

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Guest Editors, Zoological Science

This issue is dedicated to Dr. Jacques Bierne and Dr. Frank Crandall, who made lasting, important contributions to the study of the development, reproduction, morphology, and taxonomy of nemerteans.

The papers in this volume were presented at the 8th International Conference on Nemertean Biology, which was hosted by Ocean University of China (OUC) and convened in Qingdao from 23 June to 26 June 2014 (Fig. 1). Twenty-one researchers had registered to the conference. Unfortunately, Thomas Bartolomaeus, Juan Junoy, José E. F. Alfaya, Alfonso Herrera-Bachiller, and Fernando Á. Fernández-Álvarez were unable to attend the meeting, but submitted posters for discussion. Twenty-two papers, including nine posters, were presented at the conference. In addition to the 13 papers published in this volume, the topics of the other presentations were: evolution of nemertean nervous system (Patrick Beckers and Thomas Bartolomaeus); new morphological and molecular types of *Lineus ruber/viridis* species complex (Daria Krämer et al.); occurrence of TTX-producing bacteria in nemerteans (Timur Yu. Magarlamov et al.); high species diversity revealed by studying wild nemertean larvae (Terra C. Hiebert and Svetlana A. Maslakova); validity of *Quasitetrastemma stimpsoni* (Alexei V. Chernyshev et al.); identification of new *Cephalothrix* species by means of molecular characters (Fernando Á. Fernández-Álvarez et al.); standardized procedure for re-describing nemertean species (Jörn von Döhren et al.); cryptic species related to *Emplectonema gracile* (Wen-Yan Sun et al.); and species diversity of the genus *Nemertopsis* (Shi-Chun Sun et al.). Similar to previous conferences, papers on morphology, taxonomy, and evolution constituted the majority of the presentations; distinctively, however, new techniques and molecular data that contributed to novel discoveries were more widely used in these papers. For instance, the use of confocal laser scanning microscopy in two papers (Chernyshev, 2015; Magarlamov and Chernyshev, 2015) largely improved our knowledge of the construction of the proboscis apparatus; DNA-based analyses were used by all six papers under the discipline Taxonomy (as well as other papers not appearing in this issue but presented at the conference) and uncovered previously unknown species diversity. Since the 7th conference convened in Santa Barbara, a new approach for describing nemertean species, namely the combination of

external characters (together with habitat and ecology) and a DNA sequence, has been proposed for nemertean taxonomy. This was discussed at the conference (e.g., Sundberg, 2015; and the poster presentation by Jörn von Döhren et al.). Although some taxonomic papers in this issue still con-

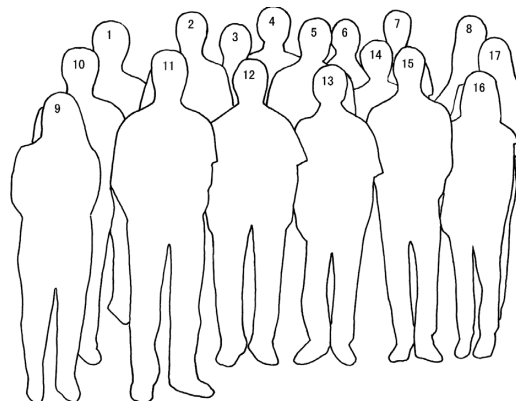
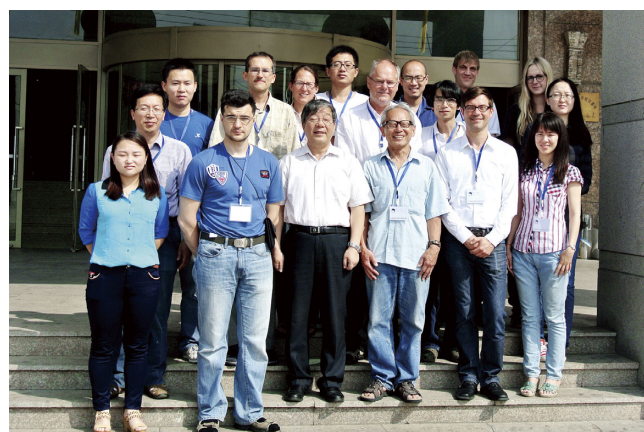


Fig. 1. Conference group picture, taken on 24 June 2014 at the entrance of Huiyuan Hotel, Qingdao, China (above), and identification (below): 1, Xing-Xing Kang; 2, Alexei V. Chernyshev; 3, Terra C. Hiebert; 4, Chun-Yang Shen; 5, Per Sundberg; 6, Brian M. Chung; 7, Patrick Beckers; 8, Daria Krämer; 9, Jin Wu; 10, Shi-Chun Sun; 11, Timur Yu. Magarlamov; 12, Shuang-Lin Dong; 13, Robert K. Okazaki; 14, Hiroshi Kajihara; 15, Jörn von Döhren; 16, Wen-Yan Sun; 17, Yue Hao.

tain histological descriptions, we hope that the present proceedings will serve as a starting point so that the species description of nemerteans consistently contains voucher sequence(s).

It is a great honor and pleasure for us to have been the organizers of this conference. We thank the participants of the 7th conference for giving us the opportunity to convene the 8th conference in Qingdao ('eight' is an auspicious number in Chinese culture, its Chinese pronunciation 'ba' is close to that of another Chinese character 'fa', which can mean to advance, to get rich/flourishing/promoted). We are delighted to see that the conference was successful in exchanging ideas and stimulating collaborations among nemerteanologists from different countries. For example, Xing-Xing Kang's presentation on *Ramphogordius sanguineus* attracted the collaboration of other researchers from Spain, Sweden and Argentina, which greatly improved the paper (Kang et al., 2015) and made it quite different from the original presentation.

While preparing the conference and during the conference, we received constructive suggestions/ideas from Jon L. Norenburg, Robert K. Okazaki, Per Sundberg, and others, although some of them were unable to attend the conference. Some colleagues could not attend the conference merely because we were unable to send announcements appropriately. Here we apologize sincerely to these researchers.

This conference was financially supported by OUC. The organizers are grateful to Miss Ji-Shu Piao, Miss Chuan Yang, and Mr. Tai Liu (International Office, OUC) for help in applying for funding and in preparing the official invitations for overseas participants, and to Professor Shuang-Lin Dong (vice president of OUC) for attending the opening ceremony and delivering a welcome speech. Our thanks are also to Chuan Zhang, Xiu-Bin Wang, and Chun-Yang Shen, who have provided logistic helps during the conference.

We, as the guest editors, are grateful to Professor Shigeru Kuratani and Professor Takema Fukatsu, the former and present Editor-in-Chief of *Zoological Science*, respectively, for providing us the wonderful opportunity to make publish this volume of proceedings in this journal. We are also thankful to the many colleagues who reviewed the articles contained in this issue: Nuria Anadón, Jörn von Döhren, Juan Junoy, Fumihiro Morishita, Jon L. Norenburg, Honoo Satake, Megan Schwartz, Malin Strand, Stephen Stricker, Per Sundberg, Martin Thiel, and James M. Turbeville.

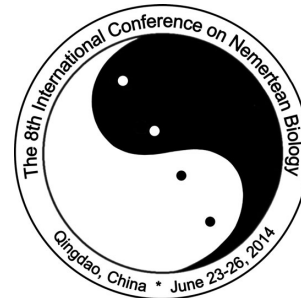


Fig. 2. Logo mark of the conference designed by Alexei V. Chernyshev based on Coe's (1943: p. 211, text-fig. 42) figure depicting encysted *Ramphogordius sanguineus* and the Yin–Yang symbol in Daoism.

Alexei V. Chernyshev designed an imaginative logo (Fig. 2), which came from a figure of encysted *Ramphogordius sanguineus* in Coe (1943: p. 211, text-fig. 42) and the Yin–Yang symbol in Daoism. Hiroshi Kajihara managed the affairs of publishing the conference proceedings. Shi-Chun Sun, as the host/convenor of the conference, is grateful to both co-organizers whose contributions were by no means limited to the roles mentioned above.

Finally, we wish to thank all the participants for contributions that made this conference successful. We are looking forward to the 9th International Conference on Nemertean Biology, which will be held in Germany in 2018 and organized by the research group directed by Professor Thomas Bartolomaeus.

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