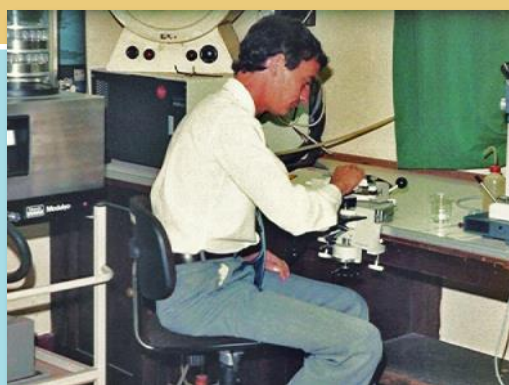


October 2023



PLANT HEALTH AND PROTECTION

Jubilee Newsletter Edition



In this second Jubilee Edition, we continue paying tribute to scientists that served the sector of plant and natural resource protection with perseverance and distinction. The stories are meant to remind us of the many years it takes to build a distinguished career and that the challenges we face today, are not completely different from what our colleagues from the past had to overcome. Issues relating to gender, scarcity of resources, unknown territories and decades of solitary field and laboratory work that required strong convictions are thematic in the lives and stories of these scientists to which we owe so much. It serves as a stark reminder that a life of scientific excellence are often judged equally strongly on the personalities of these charismatic researchers as much as the professional footprints they left behind.

Happy reading!

- Dr Ansa van Vuuren (Senior Manager: Plant Health and Protection)

Top to bottom: Allan Phillips preparing mycology samples for microscopy analysis, Elmé Breytenbach in the field trip collecting insects, *Prosopis* plant being chemically controlled with a knapsack sprayer

PHP Pioneers



Dr Eddie Uckermann (above) with one of his collaborators (below)

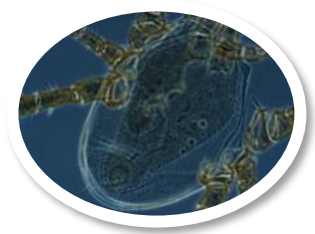


A mix sample of mites before sorting (above) and mites in the National Collection of Arachnida (Acari) below



Dr Eddie Uckermann

Pioneer of Acarology (Mites)



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.

Dr Ueckermann joined the Agricultural Research Council - Plant Protection Research Institute (ARC-PPRI) in Pretoria as a research officer in February 1976, not long after completing his masters degree. His first project at the institute involved the study of spider mite pests on cotton.

Within 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, Dr Ueckermann visited various major mite collections in Florence (Italy), Leiden (The Netherlands) and the British Museum in London in 1989. During his visit to England, he attended the Summer School in Acarology at the University of Reading. His major research interest for more than 40 years was the taxonomy of mites of agricultural importance, especially the family Phytoseiidae, and the important worldwide group of predatory mites.

During his career, he contributed significantly to knowledge of phytophagous, parasitic (medically and veterinary), and other predatory mite families relevant to agriculture. He featured prominently in mite identification for amongst others, South African plant quarantine services, universities, farmers, the public, and the Agricultural Research Council. He continues to conduct collaborative research with researchers from different countries, including Benin, Brazil, Cape Verde, Egypt, France, Israel, Japan, Kenya, Spain, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, USA, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Dr Ueckermann frequently offered training to students of the Universities of Stellenbosch and Pretoria on parasitic mites, and to South African quarantine officers on several mite groups. Eddie had the opportunity to work with many collaborators throughout his career. As a young scientist, he had the chance to work extensively with Dr Meyer, renowned South African acarologist, with whom he published 24 papers during the first half of his career.

Over the years, Dr Ueckermann has been a member of the editorial boards of six scientific journals, namely the *International Journal of Acarology*, *Acarologia*, *Zootaxa*, *Persian Journal of Acarology*, *Experimental and Applied Acarology* and *Systematic and Applied Acarology*. He has also contributed as reviewer of articles in many scientific journals, including those of which he was a member of the editorial board, as well as *Acarina*, *Journal of Asia-Pacific Entomology*, *African Zoology* and *Journal of Natural History*. He was also the chairman of the African Acarology Association in its first three years of existence between 1998 and 2011. He not only helped his counterparts to publish, but he also published extensively himself. To date, he has described 23 new genera and 240 new species, in more than 212 scientific papers.

Eddie, as he is called by his friends, is an admirable man, both for his enviable professional qualities and for his tremendous personality.

PHH Pioneers



Dr Helmut Zimmermann

Dr Helmut Zimmermann

Pioneer of Weeds Biocontrol

Dr Zimmermann is one of the pioneers in the biological and integrated control of invasive cactus species in South Africa.

Dr Zimmermann joined the staff of the ARC-PPRI and shortly went off to Argentina during 1969 to 1973-to study the natural insect enemies of invasive cacti of South American origin. This work formed the foundation for his PhD degree at Rhodes University, where he graduated in 1980. In 1992, he became the Division Manager of Weed Research at the PPRI.

He was head of the Weeds Research Division for 16 years-which was a particularly successful era for weed biocontrol. During this time, he helped to build on the division's reputation throughout the challenging years of adapting to wide-ranging changes in management and funding structures, research requirements and international relationships.

When the South African government initiated the Working for Water (WfW) programme in 1995, Dr Zimmermann approached WfW's Steering Committee, outlining the available expertise in biological control, and stressing the importance of the approach. As a result, WfW generously funded, and continues to fund, research into biological control. The situation was later summarised by Zimmermann *et al.* (2004) as follows: *"There is little doubt, in retrospect, that if it had not been for the active intervention of Working for Water, the practice of weed biological control in South Africa would have languished, perhaps almost stopped"*.

Dr Zimmermann's excellent international standing created many opportunities for him and the division to collaborate with foreign countries on scientific and other issues. His expertise is still being sought by several African countries that share weed problems with South Africa. The benefits of his research on cacti extend as far as Mexico, where he plays a key role in a campaign to mitigate the impacts of the introduced cactus moth, *Cactoblastis cactorum*. The high esteem in which weeds biocontrol is currently held by the Working for Water (WfW) Programme of the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry reflects his untiring and dedicated attempts to provide WfW with safe and effective biocontrol agents while demonstrating to them how indispensable this control method is in the integrated management of alien invasive plants.

An era in the biological control of weeds ended when Dr. Helmut Zimmermann took early retirement from his position as Division Manager of Weeds Research at the institute during mid-2004. However, Dr Zimmermann is still active during his retirement. He seems even busier than before, chairing a small firm of environmentalists and ecologists known as HZA (Helmut Zimmermann and Associates). One of their most challenging current assignments consists in coordinating the development of the Biodiversity Act Regulations on Alien and Invasive Species.



Helmut Zimmermann, John Hoffmann and Cliff Moran (left-right) at the XIV International Symposium on Biological Control of Weeds in 2014



The Uitenhage campus with visitors from Mexico



PHP Pioneers



Dr Carina Cilliers

Dr Carina Cilliers

Pioneer of Weeds Biocontrol

Carina Cilliers is well-known locally and abroad for her contribution to biological control, both in the field of agricultural pests and invasive alien plants.

Dr Cilliers started her career in Nelspruit, where she was employed at the forerunner of the ARC Institute for Tropical and Subtropical Crops. Soon she moved to Pretoria, where she resumed research in the Biological Control Section of the Division of Entomology at the Parasite Laboratory of the old Division of Entomology of the Department of Agricultural Technical Services in Sunnyside, under the guidance of the Drs Dave Annecke and Eric Bedford. As for others in the field, they remained her main mentors. Dr Cilliers played an important part with Dr Annecke and Dr Bedford in bringing several of a complex of citrus pests under biological control in South Africa, thus breaking a vicious cycle of ever increasing pesticide application. Her observations on parasitoids of a number of major local and introduced pests of citrus are still considered valuable today.

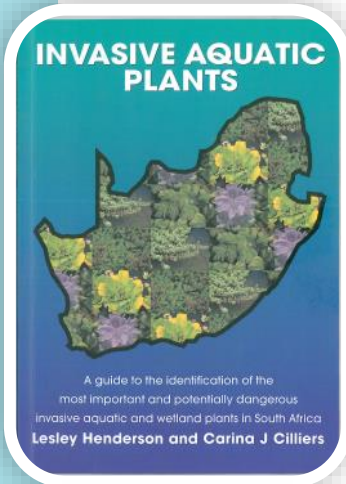
She and others in the Biological Control section worked with Dr S.W. Broodryk on the biological control of cotton pests. For a few years she was in charge of an integrated pest control programme on cotton, participating in observations and counting for days and days in cotton fields. For a brief period she headed the section of Biological Control in PPRI.

The switch from pest control to weed control commenced in earnest in 1974 when Carina spent six months in Australia, partially funded by a Public Service bursary. She worked under the guidance of some of the most experienced weed biological control scientists under the leadership of Dr Ken Harley – she forged a lasting and rewarding association and friendship with those colleagues. Upon her return to South Africa, she was put in charge of the biological control of lantana, a difficult project that she pursued with tenacity, with little funding and assistance and only make-shift quarantine facilities. She nevertheless introduced 16 species of natural enemies, six of which eventually established. She proved conclusively that some of them were curbing the growth and reducing the vigour of the weed along the Kwa-Zulu Natal south coast and inland in the low lying subtropical areas of Mpumalanga, where large, dense lantana infestations have since become rare. This evaluation of the effect of the insects on the plant earned her a Ph.D. from Rhodes University in 1982.

Since 1985, her research centered on controlling several floating aquatic weed species from South America. Two of these projects – targeting salvinia and water lettuce – resulted in rapid, unqualified success, while the beetle she had introduced against parrot's feather was also extremely effective. With dedication Dr Cilliers worked towards developing an integrated control project for water hyacinth locally. Throughout her career, she was a passionate ambassador for biological control, and she excelled in guiding new workers, scholars and teachers.

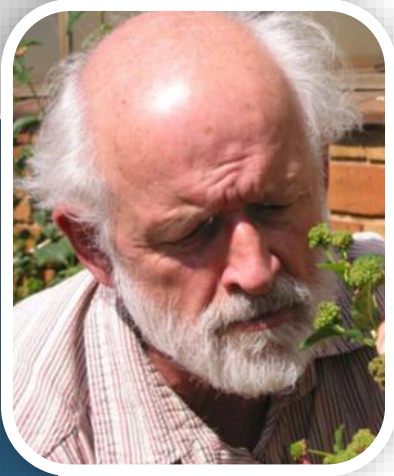
During 1993, Carina was honoured with the Dave Annecke Award for her achievements in weed science, and in 2002 the Southern African Weed Science Society once again paid tribute to her 'Outstanding Service to Weed Science'. This Institute presented her with the Director's Award for her association with PPRI 1960–2002.

As ever, Dr Cilliers likes helping friends, colleagues, students, insects, plants and other animals. Her motto remains: 'I am here to help. I can but take with me faith, hope and love.'

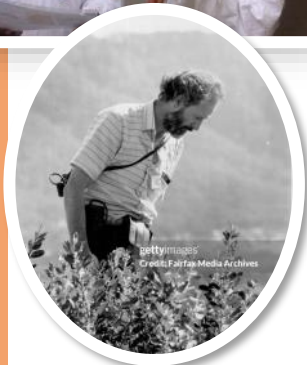


Aquatic weeds glasshouse at the Rietondale campus, Pretoria

PHP Pioneers



Dr Stefan Nesper (above) in the field sharing his knowledge and passion with students (below)



Professor Stefan Nesper

Pioneer of Weeds Biocontrol

16 April 1942 to 17 February 2021.

Stefen Nesper's greatest contribution to the biological control of plant invaders has been the collection of natural enemies of invasive weeds in their country of origin.

Dr Stefan Nesper, once described as 'one of the best field entomologists of our time', has left indelible footprints at the Agricultural Research Council's Plant Health and Protection (ARC-PHP), as well as in the lives of all those who were so privileged to have known him.

Dr Nesper started his career as regional entomologist at the Department of Agriculture in 1961. One of his first research projects, a study of *Chrysodeixis acuta*, a recently discovered pest on tomatoes, potatoes, and bananas, formed the subject of his M.Sc., which he obtained with distinction in 1964.



Chrysodeixis acuta a pest studied by Dr Nesper in 1964

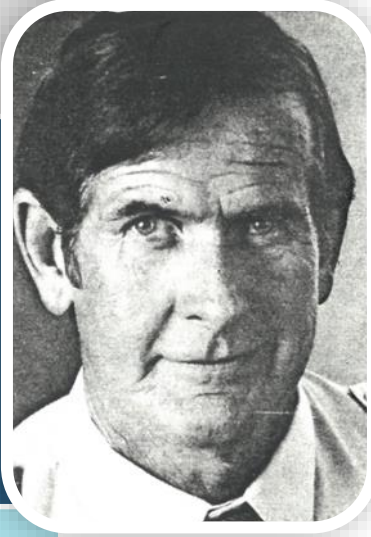
Through this work, he caught the attention of Dr Annecke of the Plant Protection Research Institute (PPRI) who was looking to create a research unit aimed at the biological control of invasive alien plants. Dr Nesper was recruited into this team, and soon left for Australia to study potential biocontrol agents against *Hakea* species. This investigation culminated in a doctorate in insect ecology from the Australian National University, Canberra, in 1968, titled: *Studies on some potentially useful insect enemies of needlebushes (Hakea spp. – Proteaceae)*.

During this period, he initiated and supervised biocontrol projects against several other invasive plant species in the Fynbos region, e.g. St John's wort (*Hypericum perforatum*), several Australian Acacia species (*A. longifolia*, *A. melanoxylon*, *A. mearnsii* and *A. cyclops*), the closely related stinkbean (*Paraserianthes lophantha*) and Australian myrtle (*Leptospermum laevigatum*). Besides the very promising insects, he also discovered pathogens and mites that were damaging the target species.

Dr Nesper was appointed as Assistant Director of the newly established Weed Research Unit in 1982 and was transferred to Pretoria. He went on to become the leader in the field of biological weed control in this country, guiding a group of some 15 professionals, who were stationed at laboratories at Pretoria (Gauteng), Stellenbosch (Western Cape) and Uitenhage (Eastern Cape), together with an entomologist based in Argentina and supervised contract research at three South African universities.

Under Dr Nesper's management, aquatic weeds in SA became targets for biocontrol for the first time and most biocontrol researchers in SA have learned the art of their trade from Dr Nesper, while exploring for biocontrol agents in some foreign country. He served as inspiration to generations of scientists, practitioners, landowners, and decision-makers in South Africa.

PHP Pioneers



Dr Dick Brown

Dr Hubert Dick Brown

Pioneer of Locust research

6 December 1930 –14 December 2017

Dr Brown worked throughout his lifetime to investigate and understand the true diversity of Southern Africa grasshoppers.

Dr Brown started his career with the International Red Locust Control Service, Abercorn, in what was then Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) and in Tanzania in 1950. He assisted with ecological studies of the red locust habitats in the grasslands. It was the start of what would be a life long association with locust and grasshopper research.

Dr Brown returned to South Africa in 1952, where he undertook his tertiary education at Rhodes University, majoring in Entomology and Botany. He joined the Division of Locust Research of the then National Department of Agriculture, based at Grootfontein, Middelburg. Here, Dr Brown started researching the brown locust ecology and studied the Karoo grasshoppers.

In 1958, Dr Brown transferred to the Division of Entomology in Pretoria to curate the National Collection of Grasshoppers, but was soon posted to Bethlehem in the Free State to study an outbreak of the wheat aphid. In 1959 Dick was awarded a bursary to study in the U.K. at the Anti-Locust Research Centre at the British Museum, under Sir Boris Uvarov, the father of Acridology, as well as the prolific grasshopper taxonomist Dr V.M. Dirsh.

In 1960, he returned to the National Collection of Insects at the ARC in Pretoria under Bill Coaton, where he specialised in grasshopper taxonomy. Over the next few years, he made long collecting expeditions into the remote parts of southern Africa. He specialised in the apterous grasshoppers from the arid regions and he collected and described genera and species, especially in the family Lentulidae.

Dr Brown built a research team to determine the population dynamics and ecology of the African migratory locusts (AML) which proved that the outbreaks were a homegrown phenomenon. However, the massive outbreak of brown locust in the Karoo during the late 1980's, allowed Dr Brown to focus on the mapping and forecasting of brown locust outbreaks. He undertook field evaluations of new generation insecticides to replace the outdated organochlorine and organophosphate (OP) pesticides being used at the time.

Dr Brown became an international leader in innovative locust management techniques and served on the FAO Pesticide Referee Panel in Rome, as well as various regional organisations.

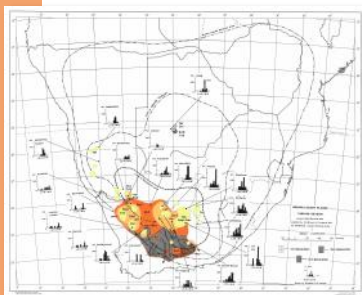
Dick stayed involved with grasshopper taxonomy until well into his 85th year and continued to publish scientific papers under the auspice of the Ditsong National Museum of Natural History, former Transvaal Museum, in Pretoria. He has over 50 scientific publications to his credit and was well known for the quality of his locust photographs. He was awarded honorary life membership of the ESSA for his contribution to grasshopper taxonomy and southern African entomology in general.



Sampling airborne sprays during tsetse ops., Botswana 2003



Red Locust swamp over Braamfontein



Brown locust plague

PHP Pioneers



Dr Andy Anderson

Dr R.H Andy Anderson

Pioneer of Beekeeping

28 August 1924 – 6 December 2016

Dr Andersons work for his Masters degree, focusing on the qualities of South African honeys, remains the basis on which the South African Honey Standards Act is based.

Dr Andersons doctoral study on the *Apis mellifera capensis* laying behaviour in 1961 became a cornerstone in the future research on the honey bee, and remains central to our understanding of Cape bees.

Dr Anderson ground-breaking work on the pollination of apples and pears, culminated in the publication of a booklet in 1985 with the Elgin Fruit growers on the subject, and was fundamental to the development of a commercial pollination industry in South Africa. When Dr Anderson started this work, less than 2% of deciduous fruit growers in the Cape introduced bees for pollination purposes, and pollination revenue was less than 1% of the total revenue earned by beekeepers. The establishment, with beekeepers like Walter Hartman and George Bradford, of Pollination Association of South Africa (POSA), helped established commercial pollination services in the country. He was the senior author of Bulletin 394, Beekeeping in South Africa, also known as the “Blue Book”.

Dr Anderson wrote numerous articles throughout his career. Ranging from queen rearing on Cape bees, to the Robben Island breeding programme with a strong focus on stock improvement of bees in South Africa, to articles about the history of bees and beekeeping in the Cape, as well as about establishing sanctuaries for Cape bees. He was the senior author of the 1974/75 Beekeeper Census, amongst other things. He also served for many years on the committee of the Western Cape Beekeeping Association, becoming an honorary member in 1965, as well as on the Department of Agriculture’s Apicultural Advisory Committee.

After serving, in World War II, Dr Anderson completed a BSc Agriculture (Entomology) at Stellenbosch and joined the Department of Agriculture in 1950, originally working on bee forage and pollination. His first scientific publication was ‘A provisional list of *Eucalyptus* species suitable for honey production in the Western Province’. Sixty-five years later, and nothing has changed!

Andy completed his MSc in 1958 on the physical properties of South African honeys, and then spent three years at Cornell University in the USA on a government bursary, completing a PhD on the biology of the Cape bee. This must have been quite a period for Andy, as he somehow managed to visit 46 of the 50 states whilst in the USA. He returned to the Department of Agriculture in Stellenbosch where he continued to work until his retirement in 1989, after forty years of service.

With his passing Dr Anderson left a beekeeping community in South Africa poorer for his passing, but thankful and cognisant of his immense contribution to their cause.



PPRI bee section in the late 1980's.
Hendrik Orien, Ben Buys, Christiaan Fransman, Attie Mostert, Dave Keetch, Andy Anderson and Doreen Gouws



Pollination of apples and pears
R H Anderson

Top: The cover of my 1974 “Blue Book”. Bottom: Today still the manual for the pollination of apples and pears

PHP Pioneers



Dr A.E. Lundie

Pioneer of Beekeeping

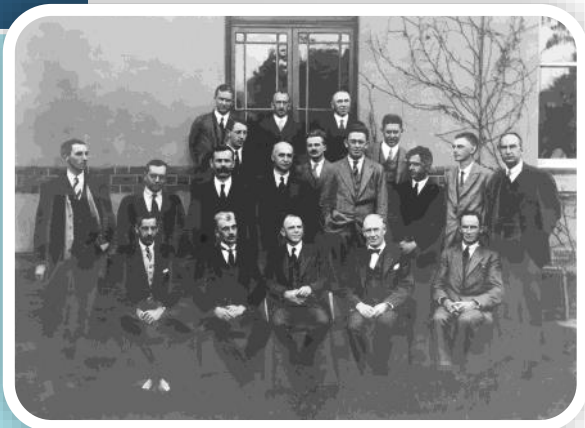
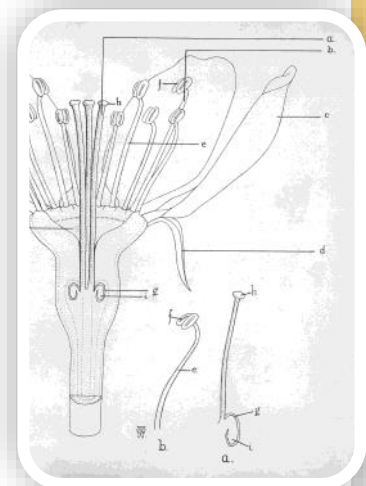
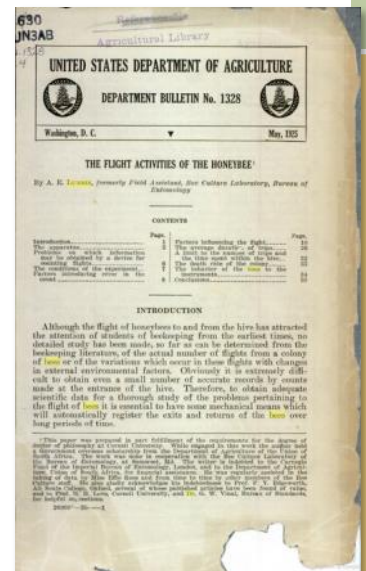
In 1923 the Department of Agriculture made the first appointment of a honeybee specialist, namely Dr. A.E. Lundie who encouraged the use of Langstroth hives and the standardisation of beekeeping equipment. He presented many well-attended beekeeping courses. Only in 1950 was a second appointment made, that of Dr. Andy Anderson (*Johannsmeier, 2001*).

Between 1930 and 1965 Dr Lundie imported Italian queens as he wanted to breed more docile honeybees. But the Italian bees could not get established in southern Africa. When the queen was introduced the brood pattern was good. But over time as the number of African worker bees dropped and the number of Italian worker bees increased, the colony dwindled (*Fletcher, 1977*).

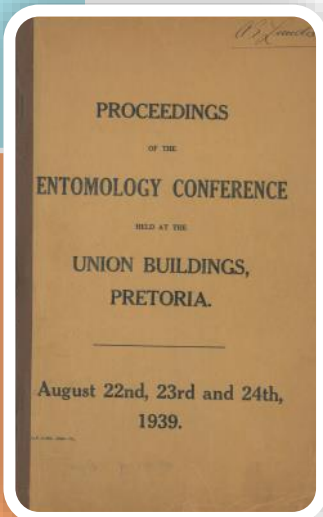
Books on beekeeping were sought after and the bulletin of F. Taylor, "Beekeeping for the beginner" was widely used during the late 1930's. In 1945 a revised edition named "Beekeeping" was published. "Beekeeping in South Africa" edited by R.H. Anderson, or the well known "Blue Book" was published in 1973, 1983 and a revised edition in 2001 edited by M.F. Johannsmeier is used as a standard reference book by the beekeeping fraternity in South Africa.

Dr Lundie (1954) stumbled by chance onto the phenomenon that laying workers of *A. m. capensis* could invade colonies of *A. m. scutellata*.

During 1920-1960 a large portion of the bee research in South Africa at this time focused on attempts to breed a more docile race of the South African bees, through the importation of European bees. Much of this work was championed by A. E. Lundie (Bee Culture Laboratory of the Bureau of Entomology). Although not much research into the laying workers of *A. m. capensis* took place during this time, Dr Lundie published an article confirming the ability of Cape honey bees to lay worker-destined eggs.



Dr A.E. Lundie (top row left) and fellow entomologist during the 1920's



Extracts or covers from some of Dr Lundie's publications (above and right)

PHP Pioneers



Dr Cecile Roux (above) and the building where she worked, Vredehuis, Pretoria.



Dr Alice Baxter (above) while working with her colleagues in the field (below)



Dr Cecile Roux

Pioneer of Mycology

Dr Roux started working at the Pretoria Mycology unit in 1974 and around this time Dr Marasas handed over the investigations of facial eczema, a major disease called 'geeldikkop' of sheep to Cecilia who had joined the staff as a technician. Within three weeks, she made a breakthrough in isolating the fungus *Pithomyces chartarum* on *Tribulus terrestris*. The culture collection, officially known by the acronym PPRI, which is a living fungal collection, was started as a research collection in 1981 by Dr Roux to accommodate the strains that formed part of her study on *Pithomyces chartarum* a pathogen of rice and sorghum. The collection is affiliated with the World Federation of Culture Collections (WFCC) and houses approximately 34 000 cultures that include numerous important plant-pathogenic and mycotoxigenic genera isolated from various monocultural crops and natural ecosystems in South Africa.



During 1984, the mycology unit and PREM become an integral part of the restructured Institute, then part of the National Department of Agriculture. Shortly before the restructuring and due to dwindling support for the collections, an initiative by Cecile Roux saw the start of a culture collection. Fellow researchers were encouraged to deposit voucher material. The culture collection PPRI was affiliated to the WFCC and the name National Collection of Fungi (NCF) replaced Mycology Herbarium as a more accurate reflection of the status of the collections.

Dr Roux retired from the PPRI in 2003 leaving an important culture collection PPRI safely in place.



Dr Alice Baxter

Pioneer of Mycology

In 1977, Dr Baxter was appointed to the Mycology Unit of PPRI. Shortly after arriving Alice received the Junior Captain Scott medal from the South African Biological Society for her M.Sc. on *Colletotrichum*.

During 1992, the PREM and PPRI collection become part of the newly formed Agricultural Research Council. During this time, Dr Baxter became the manager of the Biosystematics Division's project on economically important fungi. This included the mycology unit and National Collection of Fungi.

In 1999, Dr Baxter left the Mycology unit and take up a post of Assistant Director within the Department of Agriculture. Dr Baxter retired from the Department as the Director Plant Health in August 2019.



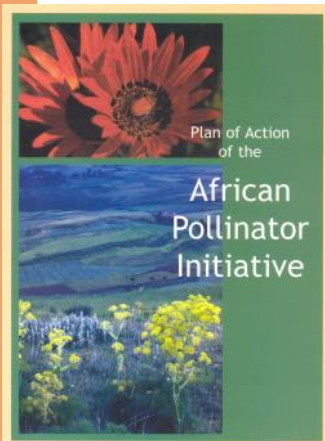
PHP Pioneers



Dr Connal Eardley



Relaxing in Cape Town after their collecting trip (from L to R) - Jessica Litman, Bryan Danforth, Terry Griswold & Connal Eardley



Dr Connel Eardley

Pioneer of solitary Afrotropical bees

Bees are important pollinators for crops and wild plants.

Dr Eardley started as Research Scientist at the then PPRI Biosystematics, Pretoria in 1977 after completing his BSc degree (1976), at the then University of Natal. He completed his PhD degree in 1995 in Entomology with the title: *Phylogeny of the Ammobatini and Revision of the Afrotropical Genera (Hymenoptera: Anthophoridae: Nomadinae)*.

During his career there were a number of highlights. He co-ordinated SAFRINET from its inception, an official SADC (*Southern African Development Community*) project and the southern African network of BioNET-International. Dr Eardley helped with the development of the International Pollinator Initiative (IPI) and the African Pollinator Initiative (API). This is a regional initiative committed to understanding, protecting and promoting the essential ecosystem service of pollination for sustainable livelihoods and the conservation of biological diversity in Africa. He help remolded SAFRINET from a programme to build traditional-type taxonomic organizations in SADC to computer automated identifications undertaken by the users of taxonomic services.

As a bee taxonomist, he is recognised as a leader in his field. He is seen as a key figure in pollinator conservation and has participated in many surveys of beneficial and pests in agricultural and natural ecosystems. For many of these surveys, he designed and constructed experimental and field equipment that was not readily available.

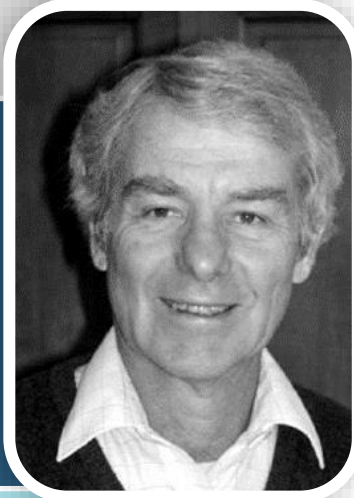
Dr Eardley spent large amounts of time in developing training courses that included course curricula and the implementation of the courses locally and internationally. This training took many forms such as meetings, seminars for SAFRINET, ARC-PPRI, API, SAFRINET and BioNET, and workshops. Some of the workshops he assisted in included APIMONDIA, IPI's first coordinating committee meeting and the Third Global Taxonomy Workshop (3GTW).

He has served on a number of committees throughout his career. Dr Eardly was the Secretary of ESSA for 13 years and the Deputy Treasurer for one year. He was the Secretary for the ESSA Biosystematics Interest Group (BIG) for two years and participated on a committee for advising the government on legislation concerning the exportation of invertebrates.

Dr Eardley's scientific and technical publications comprise of thirty-two scientific articles, 14 of which are major systematic revisions, 17 technical/semi-scientific articles, 1 book, seven book reviews, numerous reports and meeting proceedings, posters and three electronic publications.

Dr Connal Eardley spent a whole career of collecting, interpreting and categorizing citations of bee names, in addition to taxonomy and helped produce an important work: *Catalogue of Afrotropical Bees* (Eardley and Urban 2010): A typical 'annotated checklist'.

PHP Pioneers



Dr Mervyn Mansell

Dr Mervyn Mansell

Pioneer of Neuroptera and Forensic Entomology

On being awarded his PhD, Dr Mansell joined the National Collection of Insects in 1979, at the then Plant Protection Research Institute. Early on during Dr Mansell's career, he was involved in the organization of several entomological conferences along with PPRI colleagues. A milestone was the single-handed organization of the Third International Symposium on Neuropterology, held in the Kruger National Park in 1988 and participants included many of the world's most prominent neuropterists.



As his career progressed, Dr Mansell focused on the promotion and relevance of entomology and particularly biosystematics, resulting in a diversification of interests into the fields of Forensic Entomology, fruit fly systematics and biology, relational database development and implementation, bio-surgery and other applied fields. He served on many committees, including the National Research Foundation to promote biosystematics.

Dr Mansell undertook Forensic Entomology work that has seen a partnership with the South African Police Service (SAPS) in over 200 cases of violent crimes. It has included several prominent serial-murder cases and a number of Supreme Court appearances as an expert State witness. He presented modules on Forensic Entomology at SAPS' Serious and Violent Crimes and Psychologically Motivated Crimes training courses.

Not one to be left behind, Dr Mansell followed developments in databases and their central role in modern biosystematics science. This led him to be member of the science subcommittee of the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) and its local counterpart, the South African Biodiversity Information Facility.

In 2004, Dr Mansell left the ARC and joined the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services (APHIS) of the United States Department of Agriculture. In his capacity as Agricultural Scientist, he is largely responsible for the technical application of USDA-APHIS' African fruit fly programme.

Dr Mansell is Extraordinary Professor with the Department of Zoology and Entomology at the University of Pretoria. Through this association he has trained students who have worked on various projects and taught, and participated in numerous field excursions.

Dr Mansell has published over 60 scientific papers, mostly on Neuroptera, but also on the application of database-accessed data to the development of GIS products, such as prediction of areas of potential invasion of fruit flies.



Afrotropical Neuroptera Biodiversity Database group



Dr Mervyn Mansell and Dr Eddie Uckermann

