

XIII International Congress of Forum Herbulot 29.6.-2.7.2026, Finland

Forum Herbulot congresses provide an excellent opportunity to share the latest research developments on the superfamily Geometroidea on global scale. These events provide a platform for networking with colleagues and exchanging ideas in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere, often combined with fieldwork and collecting. The congresses occur every two years, alternating between European and non-European venues.

We are delighted to announce that, following the congress held in South Africa in January 2025, the next congress will take place in Finland from June 29 to July 2, 2026. The venue will be [Hotel Lepolampi](#) in southern Finland, which is conveniently accessible by public transportation due to its proximity to Helsinki airport and the capital region. Set in the countryside by a small lake, the surrounding areas boast conifer-dominated mixed forests.

Participants can collect specimens at the venue and throughout Finland, as no collecting permits are needed outside protected areas in this country. Additionally, no export permits are needed, and accessing Finnish genetic resources for research purposes under the Nagoya protocol is open, so molecular research does not require a permit either.

The congress will include a visit to [Finnish Museum of Natural History](#) in Helsinki and an excursion to the nearby nature recreation area in [Palakoski](#).

Further information, including important dates for abstract submission and registration as well as pricing details, will be included in the next Newsletter.

The Organisation Committee — Pasi Sihvonen, Maria Heikkilä, Mikael Englund, Kyung Min Lee and Elena Kochanova — warmly invite you to join us in Finland!

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Palakoski recreation area,
Vihti



Hotel Lepolampi,
Espoo



Finnish Museum of Natural History,
Helsinki

The Forum Herbulot Newsletter appears regularly two times per year and will be posted on the webpage of Forum Herbulot: www.herbulot.de. Old issues can be accessed there. Membership in the Forum Herbulot initiative is free.

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XII International Congress of Forum Herbulot

We are pleased to share a detailed account of the recently concluded XII International Congress of Forum Herbulot, an event that significantly advanced biodiversity research initiatives, particularly in the Southern Hemisphere. Held from the 27th to the 31st of January 2025, this congress was hosted at The Conclave Country Lodge, a picturesque venue located near Pretoria, South Africa. This gathering served as a melting pot of ideas and discussions centered on biodiversity research on the superfamily Geometroidea, with a keen focus on the unique challenges and opportunities present in the Southern Hemisphere.

The congress brought together a group of 23 dedicated participants from around the globe, each contributing their expertise and perspective to the overarching theme of the event. True to the spirit of scientific collaboration and exchange, a total of 23 talks were presented. These presentations covered a wide array of topics, each shedding light on various aspects of biodiversity research, from taxonomic studies to conservation

strategies and technological advancements in the field. Each session was designed to provoke thoughtful dialogue and inspire innovative solutions among attendees.

Beyond the formal presentations, the congress also offered attendees ample opportunities for informal interactions and networking. Social events were organized throughout the duration of the congress, providing participants with the chance to forge new relationships and strengthen existing ones in a relaxed and congenial setting.

One of the highlights of the congress was the nightly light trapping sessions. These hands-on activities allowed participants to engage directly with local biodiversity and apply theoretical insights in a practical setting. The light trapping sessions not only served an educational purpose but also enhanced camaraderie among the attendees, as they worked alongside one another in pursuit of common scientific goals.





At the conclusion of this successful event, Pasi Sihvonen extended a warm invitation to all participants to join the upcoming XIII International Congress of Forum Herbulot. This next gathering is scheduled to be held from the 29th of June to the 2nd of July 2026 in Finland. The announcement was met with enthusiasm, and participants expressed keen interest in continuing their collaborative efforts and discussions in Finland.

Overall, the XII International Congress of Forum Herbulot was a resounding success. It set a benchmark for future conferences by fostering a collaborative environment conducive to impactful research and networking. We wish to extend our heartfelt gratitude to all participants for their valuable contributions and enthusiasm, which were central to the success of the event.

We look forward to seeing how the ideas exchanged and connections made during this congress will translate into meaningful advances in biodiversity research, both in the Southern Hemisphere and beyond. Stay tuned to our website for updates on future conferences and ongoing research initiatives inspired by this pivotal event.



Organization team of Forum Herbulot

Abstract Book: Staude, H., Rajaei H., Hausmann A. & Sihvonen P. (ed.) 2025. *Proceedings of the 12th International Congress of Forum Herbulot; Accelerating Biodiversity Research in the Southern Hemisphere*. January 27 – 31, 2025, South Africa. 48 pp. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14234682>

Axel Hausmann handovered

the management team of Forum Herbulot

After a remarkable journey spanning 25 years, Axel Hausmann has decided to step down from the management team of Forum Herbulot. As the main founder of Forum Herbulot—together with Manfred Sommerer—Axel Hausmann has played a crucial role in establishing one of the world's most successful non-commercial scientific communities and research initiatives.



Under his leadership, Forum Herbulot has grown into a truly global network, now boasting more than 160 members (“Herbulotians”) from 42 countries. Our members are renowned experts in lepidopterology, with a primary focus on Geometroidea—the second-largest superfamily within the order Lepidoptera. Throughout the years, Forum Herbulot has organized 12 international congresses, bringing together specialists in Ge-

ometridae for networking, sharing ideas, and fostering collaborations in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere—and often in the field alongside hands-on collecting expeditions.

Forum Herbulot has also made significant scientific contributions, most notably in continuously updating and enhancing the [World Catalogue of Geometrid Moths](#). The initiative itself is named after the eminent French lepidopterist Claude Herbulot, who built the world's largest collection of geometrid moths—now housed at the Bavarian State Collection in Munich, Germany under the curation of Axel Hausmann.

Now, with our community stronger than ever, Axel Hausmann has chosen to hand over the leadership of Forum Herbulot to Pasi Sihvonen and Hossein Rajaei, who have both served on the Forum's scientific board for several years. We are confident that Pasi and Hossein will continue Axel's legacy and guide Forum Herbulot into a bright and innovative future.

On behalf of all Herbulotians, we express our deepest gratitude to Axel Hausmann for his visionary leadership, tireless commitment, and immense scientific contributions over the past 25 years. We wish him all the very best for the future!

Thank you, Axel!

The 24th European Congress of Lepidopterology

Registration Now Open

The Society for European Lepidopterology (SEL) is pleased to announce that registration is now open for the 24th European Congress of Lepidopterology, taking place August 18–23, 2025 in Svatý Jan pod Skalou, Český Kras, Czech Republic.

Dr. Zdenek Faltýnek Fric warmly invites lepidopterists from around Europe and beyond to join this special event celebrating Lepidoptera research and conservation.

This exciting congress will be jointly organized by the SEL in collaboration with the Biology Centre of the Czech Academy of Sciences (České Budějovice), the University of Life Sciences (Prague), the Czech Nature Conservation Agency, and Czech Butterfly Conservation (SOM).

The unique venue for this meeting will be a medieval monastery, which has witnessed a rich and varied history: abolished in 1785, serving different functions over the centuries (including, briefly, a jail for political prisoners around 1950), before being returned to the Archdiocese of Prague in 1994. Today, it is home to a middle school and offers a remarkable setting for scientific exchange.

Set in the heart of the Czech Republic, this congress is easily accessible—just 20 minutes from Prague—within the beautiful Landscape Protected Area of Český kras.

For more details and to register, please visit the congress website: <https://sel.entu.cas.cz/>

We look forward to seeing you in 24th SEL congress!



A Field Trip to Mount Sheba, South Africa

Mikael Englund

Immediately after the closure of 12th International Congress of Forum Herbulot a group of nine herbulotians parted for a three-day post congress field trip to Mount Sheba Nature Reserve in Mpumalanga, South Africa. The Mount Sheba Rainforest Hotel & Resort provided nice accommodation perfectly situated in the middle of a magnificent moist Afromontane Forest harbouring unique and megadiverse flora and fauna.

We set up lights in our lodge gardens, forest nearby, and in the “Lost City” mountain top area with spectacular rock formations only some kilometres uphill from the resort. The lepidopteran fauna along with flora changed remarkably just moving a short distance along the mountain slopes.

Mount Sheba is among other things the home to the rare Samango Monkeys only found in rainforests; some individuals having developed skills to snatch items from hotel guests including Lepidopteran samples. For all of us, except for Hermann, this was the first and a never-to-forget experience in this magnificent location.

Many of us were particularly interested in searching the newly described larentine moth *Chloecolora vergetaria* (Englund & Staude 2024), most of type material collected here by our excellent host and guide Hermann Staude. This part of the trip was a total success with several adult specimens coming to light and a few larvae found on the host plant *Sclerochiton harveyanus* growing abundant from the outskirts of the resort.



Participants ready for dinner in The Mount Sheba Rainforest Hotel & Resort restaurant; from left to right standing: John Brown, Hermann Staude, Mikael Englund, Hossein Rajaei, Pasi Sihvonen; sitting on the coach: Marja Heikkilä, Poody Brown, Iva Mihoci, Karoliina Reunanen.



Pilgrim's Rest, Mount Sheba Nature Reserve, Lost City, view from top, approximately 1920 meters above sea level.



Chloecolora vergetaria male on the host plant.



Chloecolora vergetaria female reared from larva demonstrating lichen mimicry.



Umbrella trap on mountain top of Mount Sheba Nature Reserve, approximately 1700 meters above sea level.

Obituary: Jeremy Holloway

Malcolm Scoble, Scientific Associate, Natural History Museum, London

With the passing of Jeremy Holloway, in March of this year, entomologists and biogeographers have lost a highly productive and key figure in lepidopteran studies. He will be remembered, especially by taxonomists, for his multi-volume work *The Moths of Borneo*, but he also made numerous contributions to Lepidoptera research including the phylogeny, general biology and numerical analysis of distribution patterns of the group. Of particular relevance to members of Forum Herbulot, was his special interest in the family Geometridae.

Although he had impressive academic credentials, Jeremy was a naturalist with a lifelong and broad interest in the natural world, from observations of wildlife to being an enthusiastic and skilled, wildlife-friendly gardener at his home in Wootton near the town of Dorking in the English county of Surrey.

Jeremy was born in Epsom in 1945 and grew up in Leatherhead, Surrey. It was in a chalk grassland meadow near his childhood home, that he developed an interest in Lepidoptera. This interest blossomed at Bryanston School, where there was a strong biology department, which also provided him with the opportunity to run a moth trap. From Bryanston he won an Exhibition to study Natural Sciences at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, where he was a member of the Cambridge Natural History Society. After his undergraduate studies, he completed his doctorate, also at Cambridge, on applying numerical methods to analyse biogeographic and ecological data on moths gathered from the island of Borneo.

It was, indeed, prior to his doctoral studies, and with his lifelong friend and collaborator Henry Barlow, that he made what proved to be a defining field trip to Mount Kinabalu in Borneo.



The material from the series of transects from base to close to the summit provided the core material for Jeremy's doctorate, where he subjected the data to quantitative analyses. His study provided the methodological experience for many of his subsequent publications. His meticulous recording of the altitudinal distribution of certain species on the mountain formed the baseline for a study of changes 50 years on in 2015, due to climate change. This subsequent study was done by a Taiwanese lady, I-Ching under the supervision of Jane Hill at York who resampled the altitudinal limits of certain moth species, showing that the species distributions had invariably moved up the mountain to varying degrees. The results probably the first exercise of this kind to measure the effects of global warming on tropical lepidoptera.

Members of Forum Herbulot will be aware of Jeremy's special interest in Geometridae. He considered them of particular importance as habitat indicators with many results and publications arising from transects he carried out in SE Asia. Besides his taxonomic work, he published on geometrid hostplant profiles, hostplant specificity, abundance, phenology and the general biogeography of the group.

Jeremy was a man with a mission. Following the Kinabalu expedition and with a doctorate under his belt he made numerous subsequent expeditions sampling moths in many localities in SE Asia and Australasia (New Caledonia; Mount Mulu, Sarawak; Seram; Sulawesi; and Norfolk Island). The data gathered from the extensive sampling of moths from these areas by Jeremy himself and colleagues resulted in a plethora of papers, either solo or with collaborators, using quantitative methods to analyse patterns of distribution and other aspects of the biology of these insects.

But his sense of purpose and focus is assuredly to be seen in the 18-volume work that comprises *The Moths of Borneo*. This series cover the taxonomy of the larger moths of the island – around 4,500 species. The value to those interested in the insect fauna of SE Asia and indeed the Indo-Australian tropics more widely is obvious. But the wider context, explicit in these works, provides many insights into the taxonomic and phylogenetic aspects of the Lepidoptera as a whole rendering them of great value to lepidopterists worldwide. Three substantial volumes cover the Geometridae. Here again, there is a wealth of information, including novel observations on higher taxa, that is of interest to all geometrid workers wherever their geographical focus. Producing such a mammoth series demands long-term focus and determination – personal qualities that Jeremy had in abundance. It was highly appropriate that Jeremy was awarded the Karl Jordan Medal in 1995, significantly for his work on *The Moths of Borneo* (MoB). That award was followed by the Linnean Society Gold Medal for services to science in 2018.

From 1978-1996, Jeremy was employed by the International Institute of Entomology (later CAB International), with a base at the Natural History Museum, London, providing access to the excellent collections and library at that organisation. He took enhanced retirement in 1996, a decision that allowed him to work intensively on the MoB and to publish further on his eco-biogeographical research. After MoB was completed, he remained active and even throughout his last years published many papers with collaborators, despite suffering the loss of his wife Phillipa (Pippa) in 2021 and impairment from seriously declining eyesight that rendered him virtually housebound. He was a member of the Scientific Board of Forum Herbulot, and he will be missed deeply not only by members of this forum, but also by many others in the UK and around the world as a colleague, friend and highly productive entomologist.



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Geometrid biodiversity – a story essentially told on the mountain

Axel HAUSMANN and Manfred SOMMERER

In the large moth family Geometridae, biodiversity patterns are often associated with mountains and mountain ranges, which reflect the Earth's geological history and have long remained undisturbed by human activities. Records and samples of geometrid species from these mountains are vital for biodiversity research. For the past 150 years, dedicated lepidopterists and collectors have explored the geometrid fauna of high mountains in Europe, Asia, and elsewhere, discovering remarkable species that have fueled studies in biogeography and phylogeny. Notable mountaineering lepidopterists from Austria and Germany including BURMANN, DIERL, PINKER, PREDOTA, REISSER, TARMANN, EBERT AND KAESWEBER. The highest summits from Switzerland to the Pyrenees were amazingly explored by Eugen WEHRLI, whose discoveries of delicate *Psodos* and *Gnophos* species led to foundational taxonomic and systematic treatises in the Supplement to volume IV - Palearctic Geometridae - of SEITZ.

The mountaineering skills required to access these extreme habitats remain impressive. In tropical mountains, the PRATT brothers, A.S. MEEK, and – rather unknown on the continent – Miss Evelyn CHEESMAN, made significant contributions to the NHM Geometridae collection. Unlike CHEESMAN, EBERT and PRATT, most entomological explorers

did not share the demanding conditions of their mountain journeys in their publications, as editors seldom allowed space for what WEHRLI called once „entomological novels“. Yet, even today, travelling to and collecting on high mountains worldwide remains a challenging and risky endeavor. Although Mount Everest is now accessible to tourists of all ages, and despite WHYMPER's challenging first ascent of the Matterhorn 150 years ago, a tourist-friendly path to the summit attracted many during a festival at Zermatt in 2015.

For biodiversity research, another event in 2015 warranted recognition: Jeremy D. HOLLOWAY's 50 years of dedication to biodiversity, beginning with his exploration of Mount Kinabalu, with 4000 m high in Borneo, in 1965.

Jeremy D. HOLLOWAY, H.J. BANKS and H.S. BARLOW started – backed by the *Cambridge Explorers and Travellers Club* – embarked on the *Cambridge Expedition to Kinabalu* to study the lepidopterous fauna of this *Bornean peak* in Sabah, Malaysia. While not the first ascent of Kinabalu, the expedition laid the foundation for a landmark project in biodiversity research: Holloway's "*Moths of Borneo*" (*MoB*) a series of 18 parts published between 1983 and 2011 under the sponsorship of Henry BARLOW and the *Malaysian Nature Society*.



Low's Peak



Granite slabs on the descent from summit area



Holloway and Banks at Sayat Sayat in 1965

MoB covers more than 4,500 species of larger moths (*Macroheterocera*), over than 1,000 of which are newly described species. It also marks a significant advancement in the higher classification of the lepidoptera.

The foundation for such a prestigious scientific work required substantial physical effort. Collecting along a transect from the jungle floor up to Mount Kinabalu's rocky summit is a rigorous task, characterized by multiple ascents and descents in varying weather conditions and at promising collection sites. It is truly something „on the wild side“ and not a „walk“. Today, the Kinabalu National Park Headquarter promotes Mount Kinabalu as one of the „easiest accessible summits in the world“, even for those without alpine experience—a far cry from the 1960s, when mountaineers faced ample challenges and risks on this formidable mountain.

Low's Peak, the summit of Kinabalu at 4095 meters, was first reached by zoologist John WHITEHEAD and his six companions on February 11, 1888. In 1858, plant hunter Spenser Buckingham SAINT JOHN and H.

Low also approached the peak. Both parties reported in detail the enormous difficulties of ascent and descent they were confronted with. Large granite, remnants of ancient glaciation, cover the summit area, becoming treacherous when wet. On a previous expedition, a porter slipped and narrowly avoided falling into an abyss when the Malayan kris wedged in a rock fissure halted his descent. Today, strong ropes are installed to safeguard visitors.

In 1965 HOLLOWAY and BANKS utilized a simple shelter at 3750 meters (*Sayat Sayat*) for overnighting and light-trapping.

Among the 137 moths was the fine geometrid *Hypocometa titanis* (Prout, 1925) and a new endemic Noctuid: *Diarsia barlowi* HOLLOWAY, 1976.

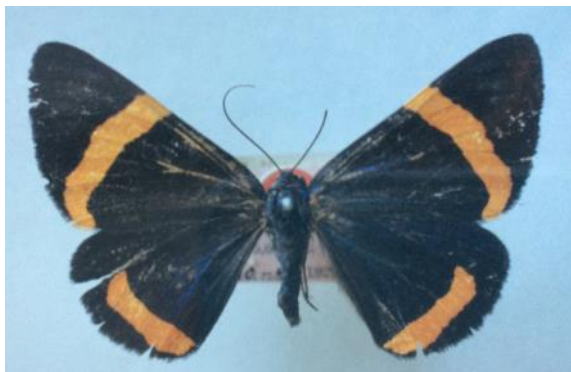
Halfway down (*Kiau Gap* at 1,760 m), HOLLOWAY collected the second female specimen of the exquisite geometrid species *Milonia pendleburyi* on a windy ridge. The holotype, also a female, was described by PROUT in 1932. No male or additional specimen of this species are known.



Hypocometa titanis (Prout, 1925)



Diarsia barlowi Holloway, 1976



Milionia pendleburyi Prout, holotype



Specimen from Kiau Gap figured in Inoue *Milionia* Catalogue

At the time of the Kinabalu Expedition, HOLLOWAY was just 20 years old, not yet a trained alpinist or Alpine Club member. In subsequent years, he frequently explored lepidopteran diversity on high mountains in Southeast Asian, becoming the first European to summit the limestone peak Gunung Api in Borneo and discovering Lycaenids in the dwarf shrubs. He helped clearing the path up to the summits of Gunung Mogonipa and Gunung Poniki in North Sulawesi during the *Project Wallace* expedition and collected specimens at the top of Gunung Kobipoto and Gunung Binaia (3,000 meters) on Seram in the Moluccas. In New Caledonia, he reached the summit of Mount Panie, the highest mountain there.

Holloway's documentation of his travels and climbs in his diaries, amidst the physical demands and precise care required for his valuable collection, is admirable. Although he never published these accounts, the results of his expeditions have been included in numerous significant publications alongside the *MoB* series.

The scientific community owes Jeremy D. Holloway a great deal for his 53 years of contribution to our understanding of lepidopteran biodiversity. While the 50th anniversary of the 1965 Kinabalu Expedition was quietly celebrated with family in London, Holloway's exceptional scientific achievements over more than half a century have recently earned him the Linnean Society of London's Medal.

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2024

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