

International Organisation of Palaeobotany



IOP NEWSLETTER 134

August 2024

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Letter from the new president

“Palaeobotany in Action”

Dear Colleagues,

It is truly gratifying to be appointed as the new President of the IOP at the XI IOPC in Prague. I sincerely thank all colleagues for the trust you have placed in me. Of the 16 past presidents, I have been fortunate to have met all but not the first, Dr. Rudolf Florin. As I trace their outstanding scientific achievements and dedication to the IOP, I am acutely aware of the weight of my responsibility.

Before I talk about the future of the IOP, I would first like to express my sincere thanks to our former president, Steven Manchester, and to the past Executive Officers, whose hard work and dedication have made the IOP what it is today. I am sorry that words are the only way to express my appreciation for the eight years of dedicated service they have provided to the IOP due to a pandemic that no one in the world could have avoided. I must also add my utmost gratitude to Jiří Kvaček and those of the conference organizing members for the fruitful success of the XI IOPC Prague, which bloomed after four-year postponement from that initiated to flower in 2020. I am sure that the participants once again confirmed that the true value of a conference can only be realized through the in-situ interaction of people with each other.

All of you may agree that the Prague conference made a new milestone for palaeobotany. The scientific naming of fossil plants using the Linnean binomial system has started by the publication by Sternberg (1820), which is officially approved as the birth of modern paleobotany. Therefore, the bicentennial of paleobotany should be celebrated in Prague in 2020, where Sternberg spent most of his academic career. Fortunately, the celebration became real this year, and it was a great honor for me to be entrusted as the IOP President beside the statue of Sternberg.

This year added another milestone to the history of the IOP. Since I joined IOP in 1984 at the time of II IOPC Edmonton, I have wondered why we are an organization and not a society or an association, but I have not given it much thought. When I became a candidate for the presidency, I happened to come across the early history of the IOP (Eduard Boureau et al. 1956 *Regnum Vegetabile* vol. 7), and now I know why. The IOP was inaugurated as a Scientific Member within the framework of the IUBS (International Union of Biological Sciences) representing Paleobotanical Section at the VIII IBC in Paris in July 1954. We are, therefore, not a mere friendly group of scientists but the organisation with purposes. Incidentally the XX IBC was invited to Madrid in July this year 2024. Prior to the COVID pandemic, the IOPC and IBC have been held in different years, and the IOP held business meetings at each. Although the two

meetings were planned too close in 2024, we could not miss the opportunity to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the IOP in Madrid. Personally, I am four months older than the IOP. Fortunately, there were numbers of paleobotanical presentations in Madrid, and we were able to have an informal celebration. During the congress I also attended the IABMS (International Association of Botanical and Mycological Sciences) Board Meeting as IOP President; please refer to later reports for details of the Prague and Madrid Congresses.

From the beginning, the IOP's main purpose has been to serve as a liaison organization among paleobotanists, to help members communicate with each other, and especially to prepare and circulate an annual publication list. The IOP News Letter has been a medium of communication among members since 1976, providing a forum for the exchange of information and discussion. It will continue as one of the main activities of the IOP, along with the IOPC. I also believe that we should actively disseminate not only the scientific interest of palaeobotany but also its social role through the home page and social media. I am asking Indah Huegele, webmaster officer, and Nareerat (Aom) Boonchai, social media officer, to do the hard work on those issues voluntarily. Thanks to them, I also hope that the generational change in the organization will be accelerated.

We can only rely on the new Executive Officers and organization members to make the IOP a place of action. Particularly without the promise that Lutz Kunzmann has agreed to take on another four years of complicated work he had finely performed, I did not agree to be a candidate for the presidency. I cordially ask each officer to be a compass and navigator for probably one of the oldest of previous presidents, by actively initiating how IOP can develop in a healthy way.

Cooperation and collaboration with related organizations is also something to consider further: for organizing the IOPC, we will continue to co-host with IFPS; the EPPC continues to be held at two-year intervals with IOPC, and we will plan next business meeting in XII EPPC 2026 (Münster, Germany). The next IBC will be in 2029 (Cape Town). IOP has voting rights at the IUBS General Assembly. In the past, we even used to receive subvention from IUBS in 1978 and 1981 for \$500 and \$1000, respectively, due to lack of annual fees. Previously IUBS General Assembly was attended by European officers such as Mike Boulter, but due to lack of funds for dispatch, I have been the IOP representative since the Egypt General Assembly in 2003, using my presence as the Japanese representative to IUBS. In 2023 IUBS 34th GA was held at Chuo University, where IOPC Tokyo Congress was held in 2012. As I will be stepping down as national representative in the future, we need to consider how to further collaborate with IUBS.

IOP is not wealthy. The payment of membership fees has always been done on the basis of goodwill. Even I myself was not sure how much was in arrears, so I rushed to make a transfer of some amount. Please remind to check your member area and the state of the payments after the migration of the IOP Website already done in May. We still owe much to Steve as Deputy

Treasurer after he stepped down from the presidency. We will start discussing the payment of membership fees immediately.

I believe that the basis of academia is freedom and peace. I believe that at least the members of the IOP with whom I have been in close contact shared the principles of gender free, nationality free and politics free. I intend to continue to uphold these principles while promoting the IOP's new information dissemination. We will start discussions on dues payment soon.

I believe that the freedom and peace should prevail first for healthy development of academia. At least the IOP members with whom I have been in close contact shared gender free, nationality free and politics free concepts. I intend to keep this principle and promote new information dissemination of IOP for the future world.

Sincerely yours,

Haru

Harufumi Nishida, IOP President 2024–2028

Prof. Emeritus, Chuo University, Tokyo; Patagon Institute of Palaeobotany, Chiba, Japan

Letter from the past president

Dear Colleagues,

It has been a pleasure to serve IOP since 2016. We faced difficult challenges dealing with realities of the Covid-19 epidemic, but adjusted as needed. It was great to see many of you again, and to meet with new members, at the recent IOPC/IPC conference in Prague. We owe our gratitude to Jiří Kvaček, Jiří Bek, Jana Drábková, Jakub Sakula and co-organizers who planned for the conference first to be in 2020, then again for the post-poned gathering in 2024. In 2020, it was our plan to celebrate two centuries of Paleobotany since the publication of “Flora der Vorwort” by Kasper Sternberg in 1820--the starting point of paleobotanical nomenclature--in Prague where our conference was held. Although we convened four years late to celebrate that event, we were also able to note that in 2024 we celebrate the 70th anniversary of IOP, which was initiated in 1954 as a spinoff from the IBC in Paris. Our first IOP conference was held in Reading, England in 1978 and (except for 2020) we have met on a four year cycle every year since: Edmonton, Melbourne, Paris, Santa Barbara, Qinghuangdao, Bariloche, Bonn, Tokyo, and Salvador. I'm happy that we can look forward now to the next IOPC/IPC conference be held in Calgary, Canada in 2028.

I thank the past officers (see list on p. XX of this newsletter) for their help in the smooth operations of IOP these past 8 years. We thank Nareerat Boonchai for maintaining the IOP facebook page, and Indah Huegele for serving as webmaster. I believe we are in good hands going forward with Lutz Kunzmann continuing for a second term re-elected as Secretary-Treasurer, and with our incoming officers, Harufumi Nishida, President.

Sincerely,

Steve

Steven Manchester (Gainesville, FL, USA), IOP President 2016–2024

Changes in the IOP Executive Committee

New IOP officers (term 2024–2028)

President:	Harufumi Nishida (Chuo University, Japan)
Vice presidents:	Marion Bamford (University of Witwatersrand, South Africa) Maria A. Gandolfo (Cornell University, Ithaca, USA) Jun Wang (Nanjing Institute of Geology and Paleontology, China)
Secretary/treasurer:	Lutz Kunzmann (Senckenberg Dresden, Germany)
Deputy treasurer*:	Steven Manchester (Florida Museum of Natural History, Gainesville, USA)
Members-at-large:	Nareerat (Aom) Boonchai (Museum of Petrified Wood and Mineral Resources, Thailand & Friend of Fossil Forest, NGO) Anne-Laure Decombeix (CNRS, Montpellier, France) Evelyn Kustatscher (Museum of Nature South Tyrol, Bozen, Italy)
Conference member**:	Christopher West (Royal Tyrrell Museum, Drumheller, Alberta, CN)
Webmaster*:	Indah Huegele (University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, USA) since 2022
Social Media*:	Nareerat (Aom) Boonchai (Museum of Petrified Wood and Mineral Resources, Thailand & Friend of Fossil Forest, NGO)

(*not elected; persons have volunteered for the positions and were confirmed by the executive committee)

(**automatically chosen as responsible IOP Member in the organizing committee of IOPC 2028)

Past IOP officers (term 2016–2020, extended to 2024)

President:	Steven Manchester (Florida Museum of Natural History, Gainesville, USA)
Vice presidents:	David Cantrill (Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria, Melbourne, Australia) Jiří Kvaček (National Museum, Prague, Czech Republic) Ruth Stockey (Oregon State University, Corvallis, USA)
Secretary/treasurer:	Lutz Kunzmann (Senckenberg Dresden, Germany)
Deputy treasurer*:	Steven Manchester (Florida Museum of Natural History, Gainesville, USA)
Members-at-large:	Marion Bamford (University of Witwatersrand, South Africa) Ignacio Escapa (Museo Paleontológico Egidio Feruglio, Trelew, Argentina) Steven McLoughlin (Swedish Museum of Natural History, Stockholm, Sweden)
Conference member**:	Jiří Kvaček (National Museum, Prague, Czech Republic)
Webmaster*:	Indah Huegele (University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, USA) since 2022 (former: Kathryn Hill (University of Adelaide, Australia))
Social Media*:	Nareerat (Aom) Boonchai (Museum of Petrified Wood and Mineral Resources, Thailand & Friend of Fossil Forest, NGO)

(*not elected; persons have volunteered for the positions and were confirmed by the executive committee)

(**automatically chosen as responsible IOP Member in the organizing committee of IOPC 2028)

IOP Honorary Memberships 2024

IOP executive committee received 6 nominations for awarding members with the honorary membership. It decided unanimously during the online business meeting on January 24, 2024 to approve all nominations. The distinguished scientists were announced during the IOP General Assembly in Prague and the certificates were presented to four of the six persons during the IOP Gala Dinner in the National Museum Prague by the outgoing and incoming IOP presidents Steven Manchester and Harufumi Nishida. Two of the distinguished persons, Heidi M. Anderson and Elisabeth Wheeler, will receive their certificates otherwise because they were not able to attend the conference.

Congratulations to all new honorary members of our organization!



[not present at IOPC Prague]

Heidi M. Anderson – University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg · South Africa

Elisabeth Wheeler – North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC · USA



Brigitte Meyer-Berthaud – French National Centre of Scientific Research, Montpellier · France



Else Marie Friis – Swedish Museum of Natural History, Stockholm · Sweden & University of Aarhus, Aarhus · Denmark; **Kaj Raunsgaard Pedersen** – University of Aarhus, Aarhus · Denmark



Zhe-kun Zhou – Xishuangbanna Tropical Botanical Garden, Mengla, Yunnan · P.R.China



Congratulations and cheers!

IOP Graduate Students Travel Awards 2024

The IOP executive committee decided during the online business meeting on January 24, 2024 to award 17 young scientists by the IOP travel grant. Eventually, 16 distinguished persons participated in the conference and could be awarded. The following persons received 1,000 \$ each.

Badihagh, Mohammad T.	Nanjing Institute of Geology and Palaeontology, China
Lowe, Alexander	University of Washington, Seattle, USA
Siegert, Caroline	Cornell University, Ithaca, USA
Slodownik, Miriam	University of Adelaide, Australia
Sui, Qun	Yunnan University Kunming, China
Thummel, Ryan	Cornell University, Ithaca, USA
Vásquez, Osmin	Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala, Cobán, Guatemala
Walker, Zane	Oregon State University, USA

The following persons received 500 \$ each.

Amores, Marcos	University College Cork, Ireland
Beurel, Simon	Museum of Natural History Berlin, Germany
Cabascango, Daniela Q.	Swedish Museum of Natural History Stockholm, Sweden
Groumpou, Maria	University of Patras, Patras, Greece
Pustovoitova, Daria	Institute of Geological Sciences, Kyiv, Ukraine
Song, Hanzhang	University of Bristol, UK
Turner, Holly-Anne	University College Cork, Ireland
Wyatt, Ama	Cardiff University, Newport, UK

CONGRATULATIONS!

IOP General Assembly at Prague

As per schedule, the general assembly was held during the IPC/IOPC in Prague on May 29, 2024.

The agenda was:

- Announcement of Honorary Memberships 2024
- Announcement of Winners of IOP Graduate Student Travel Grants
- Statement of account of executive committee
- Farewell of outgoing IOP officers (see p. 4–5 in this newsletter)
- Results of elections of new IOP officers (see p. 4 in this newsletter)
- IOPC-2028: Canadian proposal and ballot
- General discussion [nothing was discussed]

The outgoing IOP executive committee gave statements of accounts for the past 8 years of business. Here are the main points:

- Members (by Mai 31, 2024): 464 persons on e-mail address list (27 addresses regularly fail); 174 persons: no fee payment information
- Newsletters: NL 112 – NL 133 (#22) published between 2017-2024 (three per year)
- Circulars: six circulars published
- Relaunch homepage: 2018 (Wordpress format; host still PalAss, will be migrated to DreamHost)
- Social media activities: regularly on Facebook and X (Twitter)
- IOP awards: Honorary Memberships: #2 (2018); #6 (2024)
- IOP travel grants: #16 (2024)
- Meetings/gatherings: IBC-2017 Shenzhen (informal dinner)
EPPC-2018 Dublin (business meeting; minutes)
- Executive committee online meetings: since 2020 one meeting per year (minutes)
- IOP support letter: for Plant Fossil Name Registry database (hosted at National Museum Prague)
- IOP public statements: on homepage against Russian war in Ukraine
- IUBS activities: IOP representative Harufumi Nishida

- Other business: regular contacts to IFPS president about plannings for IPC/IOPC
- Finances (since last business meeting 2018):

Bank account: 14.08.2018: 19,201.77 \$ + PayPal: 250.78 \$

30.03.2024: 19,264 \$ + PayPal: 2,106.30 \$

Expenses: 12,000 \$ (travel grants 2024)

9.24 \$ (three-year hosting plan from DreamHost, 2024)

(wire fees are still not included)

Operational cash reserves: 14.08.2018: 2,600.00 € (treasurer) + 130 € (president)

29.05.2024: 2,589.20 € (treasurer) + 130 € (president)

Expenses: 10.80 € (print award certificates)

The results of the elections for the positions in the Executive Committee were announced and new IOP officers were asked if they are willing to take over their duties. All persons agreed. The outgoing executive committee members sincerely thanks Indah Huegele for organizing the online elections.

Christopher West introduced the proposal for Calgary in Canada for IPC/IOPC-2028 on behalf of the entire planning committee. The proposal was carried unanimously. As IFPS also voted for Calgary as next conference venue: the joint XVI IPC & XII IOPC will be held in Calgary in 2028.



Meeting reports

XV. IPC / XI. IOPC 27–31 May 2024 Prague – 200 Years of Palaeobotany

The joint conference was held at the Clarion Congress Hotel which was a great place for the scientific program but also for communication, informal meetings and inspiring discussions. 521 delegates from 46 countries from all continents (except Antarctica) were registered. They gave 367 oral presentations and presented 72 posters, respectively, within 92 scientific sessions and 46 symposia. Many participants enjoyed the two social highlights of the conference, the Ice Breaker Party at Clarion Hotel and the Gala Dinner at National Museums. The palaeobotanical exhibition with professional artistic paintings of ancient vegetation, presented next to the poster session area at the venue, was an additional highlight of the program. The social lunches and coffee breaks at the venue were well organized and gave plenty of opportunities for new and refreshed personal contacts.

Beside the main scientific program pre- and post-conference field trips were organized and participants could visit famous and important geological and palaeontological sites in the Czech Republic. The last conference day offered free-admission visits to the historical building of the National Museum, the exhibition of the Natural History Museum of the National Museum, the botanical garden of the Charles University and the Chlupáč's Museum of Earth History.

Many thanks to all members of the organizing committee, the partner institutions, sponsoring partner and the C-IN company for organizing and conducting this wonderful meeting!

Some impressions from the conference:



Group photo in front of the conference venue.



Heads of the organizing committee during the welcome ceremony of the conference (above) and during the gala dinner at National Museum (below): Jiří Bek, Jiří Kvaček, Jana Votočková Frojdová and Jakub Sakala (from left).



During welcome ceremony: Jiří Kvaček talks about legacy of Caspar M. Sternberg.



During welcome ceremony: Marion Bamford gives an invited scientific lecture.



During welcome ceremony: Jun Wang gives an invited scientific lecture.



The organization *Friends for Fossil Forests* at the venue: Nareerat (Aom) Boonchai, Sam Allen and Indah Huegele (from left), the initiators and founders of the group presenting their organization and distributing advertising materials.



Welcome talk of the director of the Natural History Museum of the National Museum, RNDr. Jiří Frank, Ph.D. at the beginning of the gala dinner in the yard of the National Museum



Gala dinner guests.



Poster area in the conference venue.



Palaeo-art exhibition in the conference venue.

XX. IBC 2024 Madrid

The XX International Botanical Congress was held in Madrid from 21-27 July 2024. About 3,000 participants met in the Madrid Fair conference center to give scientific talks and introduce research by posters. The Nomenclature Session was held during the week before the congress.

About 40 palaeobotanists and palaeo-palynologists were among the participants. A couple of symposia with fossil plant sciences as focal topics were organized and co-organized by IOP members such as the “Biological Diversity Hidden in Early Terrestrial Sites of Exceptional Preservation” by Christine Strullu-Derrien, Alexander Hetherington and Sean McMahon; “An Update on the Phylogeny of Seed Plants” by Patrick Herendeen, Peter Crane and Susana Magallón, “The Origin and Evolution of Modern Plant Diversity: Insights from Multiple Disciplines” by Tao Su, Alexandra Muellner-Riehl and Agathe Toumoulin and “Plants in Fossil Lagerstätten” by Lutz Kunzmann, Evelyn Kustatscher and Ronny Rößler (see group photo 1).

IOP celebrated its 70th anniversary as separate organization. IOP was initiated and founded during the International Botanical Congress in Paris 1954. In occasion to celebrate this important date an informal gathering of IOP members and other colleagues from fossil plant sciences was organized in a restaurant (see group photo 2).



Participants of the IOP social gathering (group photo 1).



Organizers, speakers and some participants of the symposium “Plants in Fossil Lagerstätten” (group photo 2)

News on IOP Homepage

Almost a year ago, the Palaeontological Association announced that it was closing down its servers. This prompted the migration of the IOP website to a new hosting service. We completed this migration right before the beginning of the IPC/IOPC gathering in Prague at the end of May of this year. To facilitate easier registration for future IOPC meetings, we strongly encourage our members to check that their membership is active and that the email associated with their account is up to date. One future improvement will be to more automated reminders for folks to renew their membership.

Besides, the content of our homepage needs regular new and updated content such as features publications and special volumes, news from members and teams, introductions of palaeobotanical collections and laboratories, conference and workshop invitations, job advertisements and biographies. Please consider to contribute.

Indah Huegele, IOP Webmaster

Upcoming meetings

12th European Palaeobotany and Palynology Conference, 2026, Münster, Germany

For more information please read announcement on p. 3 of IOP Newsletter 132.

32nd International Workshop on Plant Taphonomy, November 8–10, 2024, Berlin, Germany

Save-the-Date!

Dear Colleagues,

We are announcing the 32nd International Workshop on Plant Taphonomy, to be held from November 8–10, 2024, and hosted at the Museum für Naturkunde Berlin. This year, we are organising a joint event together with an APP meeting (Arbeitskreis für Paläobotanik und Palynologie).

We appreciate oral or poster contributions from the fields of palaeobotany, palynology, plant evolution, or related geoscientific disciplines. Especially, we want to encourage young scientists (students, PhD candidates) to share their scientific results in a familiar environment of our community but also of citizen scientists who like to share their results. Conference languages will be English and German. The First Circular will be spread by the end of February. In case of interest or questions, please contact: ludwig.luthardt(at)mfn.berlin.

Ludwig Luthardt (Museum of Natural History Berlin)

Berlin, 19/02/2024

42nd Mid-Continent Paleobotanical Colloquium (MPC), Saturday May 17, 2025, at Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut, USA

Paleobotany enthusiasts:

Please save the date for the 42nd MPC! We are excited to welcome you to the Hartford Basin, home to sediments that record the aftermath of the end-Triassic mass extinction.

The main MPC program (talks / posters / dinner) will be on the 17th at Wesleyan. An optional field trip to the revamped Yale Peabody Museum will be on the 18th. If you are looking to link the meeting with other nearby activities, Yale is about 30 minutes away and New York and Boston are each about 2 hours away, depending on traffic.

We will launch the MPC website in early 2025 with information about registration, hotels, etc. I will send out a second and final email blast in advance of the website launch.

We hope to see you in Middletown next year!

Wesleyan organizing committee: Dana Royer & Xiaoqing Zhang

Disclaimer:


Newsletter edited by Lutz Kunzmann & Steven Manchester.

The views expressed in the newsletter are those of its correspondents, and do not necessarily reflect the policy of IOP.

Newsletters are regularly issued in February, June and October every year.

Please send us your contributions for the next edition of our newsletter (135) until end of October 2024.

Contributions should be sent to Lutz.Kunzmann(at)senckenberg.de.

 Homepage: www.palaeobotany.org



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