

Preface

Myriapoda in a Fractured World. Proceedings of the 20th International Congress of Myriapodology (Srebrno Jezero, Serbia)

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Accepted: 28 August 2026 / Published online: 20 September 2026

Citation: Antić D, Makarov S. 2026. Myriapoda in a Fractured World. Proceedings of the 20th International Congress of Myriapodology (Srebrno Jezero, Serbia). In: Antić D, Makarov S, guest editors. Myriapoda in a Fractured World. Proceedings of the 20th International Congress of Myriapodology (Srebrno Jezero, Serbia). Biologia Serbica. 48(1):3–9. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.22142639>

The International Congress of Myriapodology (ICM) is the leading event for both professional researchers and dedicated amateurs who are fascinated by the world of a special group of terrestrial animals, the Myriapoda. The congress also brings together enthusiasts of another “multi-legged” group, the Onychophora. Thanks to Jean-Marie Demange, the first congress took place in 1968 in France. At this inaugural meeting, three distinguished myriapodologists – Jean-Marie Demange, Jean-Paul Mauriès, and Otto Kraus – founded the Centre International de Myriapodologie / International Society for Myriapodology (CIM). Although the society is smaller than some other international organisations, it is highly dedicated. It brings together senior researchers, early-career scientists, and students – all on equal footing – and fosters an environment where ideas can be freely exchanged and collaborations can develop. During the congresses, members have had the opportunity to meet in person, share their passion for myriapods, and form lifelong friendships, making the gathering not only a scientific event but also a warm and supportive community.

Following the 1st ICM, to date a total of 20 congresses have been held (Table 1). Until 2017, the congresses were held every three years, with the exception of a gap between the first and second gatherings. Since 2017, the congress has

been held every two years, except for the interval between the 18th and 19th congresses, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Over nearly six decades, the congresses have been held on every continent except Antarctica, in 17 countries, with Europe hosting 15 meetings, including two each in France, Italy, and Germany. North America, South America, Africa, Asia, and Australia have each hosted one congress (Fig. 1). The proposal to host the 20th anniversary congress in Serbia was first put forward at the CIM General Assembly during the 17th ICM in Thailand. It was subsequently reaffirmed at the 18th ICM in Hungary, and finally officially presented by Dragan Antić and approved at the General Assembly during the 19th ICM in Colombia.

The 20th International Congress of Myriapodology was held at Danubia Park Hotel, Srebrno Jezero, Serbia, on the right bank of the Danube, from the 20th to the 26th of July, 2025. The congress was organized by the University of Belgrade – Faculty of Biology, in cooperation with CIM. This was the first myriapodological congress held on the Balkan Peninsula, a region well known for its rich myriapod fauna and recognized as one of the hotspots of subterranean biodiversity. A total of 85 participants and 11 accompanying persons were registered (Figs 2–5), representing 27 countries across five continents: North America, South America, Europe, Asia, and Australia.

Table 1. List of all International Congresses of Myriapodology.

Congress	Place	Country	Date	Year
1 st ICM	Paris	France	8–13 April	1968
2 nd ICM	Manchester	England	5–12 April	1972
3 rd ICM	Hamburg	Germany	3–9 April	1975
4 th ICM	Gargnano	Italy	17–20 September	1978
5 th ICM	Radford	USA	3–7 August	1981
6 th ICM	Amsterdam	The Netherlands	12–17 April	1984
7 th ICM	Vittorio Veneto	Italy	19–24 July	1987
8 th ICM	Innsbruck	Austria	15–20 July	1990
9 th ICM	Paris	France	26–31 July	1993
10 th ICM	Copenhagen	Denmark	29 July – 2 August	1996
11 th ICM	Białowieża	Poland	20–24 July	1999
12 th ICM	Mtunzini	South Africa	29 July – 2 August	2002
13 th ICM	Bergen	Norway	24–30 July	2005
14 th ICM	Görlitz	Germany	21–25 July	2008
15 th ICM	Brisbane	Australia	18–22 July	2011
16 th ICM	Olomouc	Czech Republic	20–25 July	2014
17 th ICM	Krabi	Thailand	23–26 July	2017
18 th ICM	Budapest	Hungary	25–31 August	2019
19 th ICM	Bogotá	Colombia	7–12 August	2023
20 th ICM	Srebrno Jezero	Serbia	20–26 July	2025

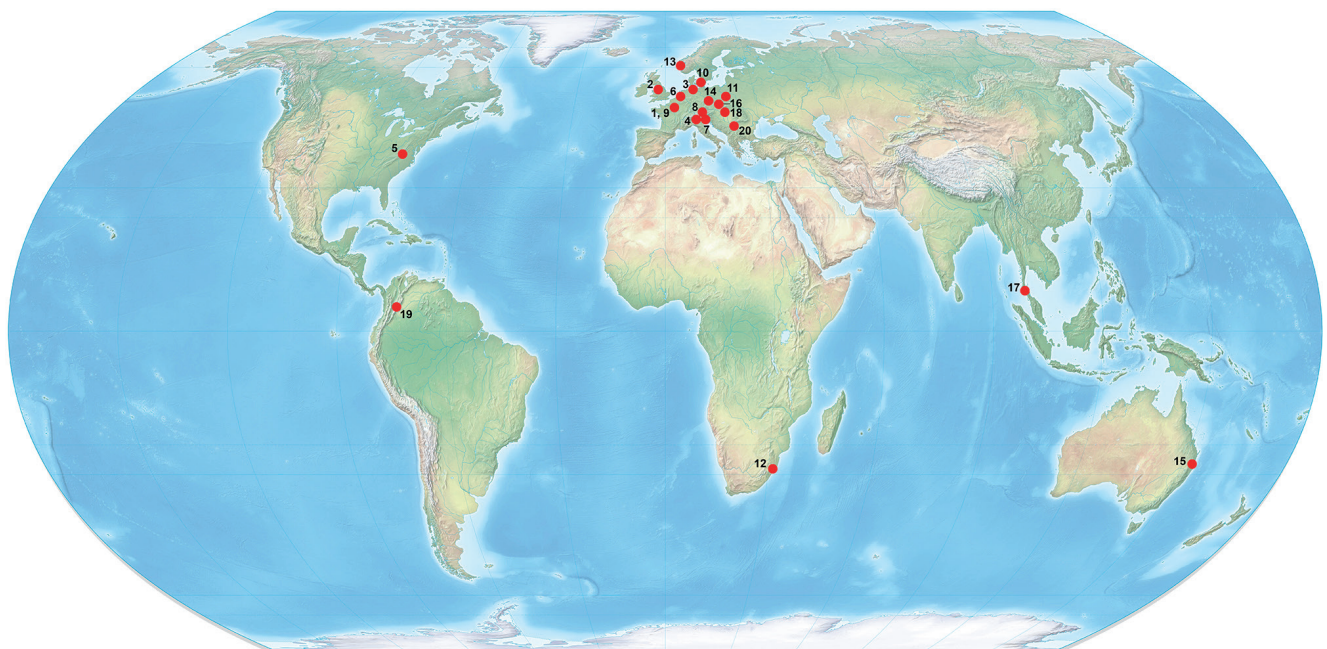
**Fig. 1.** Geographical distribution of the International Congresses of Myriapodology. The numbers correspond to the order of the ICMs in Table 1.



Fig. 2. Group photo of the 20th ICM participants in the hall of Danubia Park Hotel.



Fig. 3. Participants of the 20th ICM. 1 – Armand Richard Nzoko Fiemapong; 2 – Nesrine Akkari; 3 – Lance Andrew; 4 – Egon Oswald; 5 – Hans Reip; 6 – Zvezdana Jovanović; 7 – Dalibor Stojanović; 8 – Anja Kos; 9 – Tvrtko Dražina; 10 – Lucio Bonato; 11 – Ana Margalitadze; 12 – Anđela Kovačić; 13 – Seunghun Jung; 14 – Štefan Baba; 15 – Carlos Alberto Martínez-Muñoz; 16 – Luiz Iniesta; 17 – Eleonora Kiria; 18 – Elena Cruz; 19 – Petar Radovanović; 20 – Magdalena Rost-Roszkowska; 21 – Thomas Wesener; 22 – Robert Opran; 23 – Ivan Kos; 24 – Sydney Irons; 25 – Petr Dolejš; 26 – Andreea Mirleneanu; 27 – Bruce Snyder; 28 – Dragan Antić; 29 – Itala Manosalva; 30 – Bojan Mitić; 31 – Carsten Müller; 32 – Per Djursvoll; 33 – Norman Lindner; 34 – Liseth Alejandra Reyes-Peñata; 35 – Zulieth Manquillo; 36 – Daniela Martínez-Torres; 37 – Jelen Milovanović; 38 – Miroko Šević; 39 – Agata Aleksa; 40 – Helen Read; 41 – Oliver Macek; 42 – Gregory Edgcombe; 43 – Peter Decker; 44 – Carolina Rojas-Buffet; 45 – Agustín Carbonell; 46 – Rodrigo Bouzan; 47 – Ognjen Simić; 48 – Filip Šiljković; 49 – Lukasz Chajec; 50 – Anna Ostrožka; 51 – Zoltan Korsós; 52 – Andy Sombke; 53 – Stylianos Simiakis; 54 – Eszter Lazányi; 55 – Boyan Vagalinski; 56 – Cuong Huynh; 57 – Megan Short; 58 – Massimiliano Di Giovanni; 59 – Markus Koch; 60 – Michaela Bodner; 61 – Paul Marek; 62 – Slobodan Makarov; 63 – Henrik Enghoff; 64 – Jéhan Le Cadre; 65 – Emiliano Peretti; 66 – Roberto Magnolini; 67 – Andreas Tadtler; 68 – Lucas Pino; 69 – Maaike de Voogd; 70 – Emmanuel Vega Román; 71 – Bojan Ilić; 72 – Ruttapon Srisonchai; 73 – John Seifert; 74 – Thea Rogers; 75 – Karel Tajovský; 76 – Fabian Barria; 77 – Ivan Tuf; 78 – Diego Miranda-Rojas.



Fig. 4. Group photo of the 20th ICM participants in front of Danubia Park Hotel.



Fig. 5. Participants of the 20th ICM. 1 – Daniela Martínez-Torres; 2 – Zulieth Manquillo; 3 – Dalibor Stojanović; 4 – Bojan Ilić; 5 – Itala Manosalva; 6 – Lucas Pino; 7 – Liseth Alejandra Reyes-Peñata; 8 – Helen Read; 9 – Michaela Bodner; 10 – Hans Reip; 11 – Nesrine Akkari; 12 – Stylanos Simaikiakis; 13 – Tvrtko Dražina; 14 – Peter Decker; 15 – Jehan Le Cadre; 16 – Agustín Carbonell; 17 – Ana Margalitadze; 18 – Eleonora Kiria; 19 – Carolina Rojas-Buffet; 20 – Thea Rogers; 21 – Elena Cruz; 22 – Maalke de Voogd; 23 – Anja Kos; 24 – Lance Andrew; 25 – Anna Ostróžka; 26 – Magdalena Rost-Roszkowska; 27 – Anđela Kovačić; 28 – Zvezdana Jovanović; 29 – Agata Aleksa; 30 – Łukasz Chajec; 31 – Carlos Alberto Martínez-Muñoz; 32 – Megan Short; 33 – Dragan Antić; 34 – Cuong Huynh; 35 – Norman Lindner; 36 – Armand Richard Nzoko Fiemapong; 37 – Bojan Mitić; 38 – Mirkó Šević; 39 – Karel Tajovský; 40 – Massimiliano Di Giovanni; 41 – Ivan Tuf; 42 – Rodrigo Bouzan; 43 – Markus Koch; 44 – Luiz Iniesta; 45 – Bruce Snyder; 46 – Sydney Irons; 47 – Lucio Bonato; 48 – Petr Dolejš; 49 – Zoltán Korsós; 50 – Thomas Wesener; 51 – Roberto Magnolini; 52 – Pavel Stoev; 53 – Emiliano Peretti; 54 – Carsten Müller; 55 – John Seifert; 56 – Seunghun Jung; 57 – Andy Sombke; 58 – Andreas Tadler; 59 – Ivan Kos; 60 – Filip Šiljković; 61 – Egon Oswald; 62 – Ruttapon Srisonchai; 63 – Jelena Milovanović; 64 – Ryosuke Uno; 65 – Paul Marek; 66 – Slobodan Makarov; 67 – Oliver Macek; 68 – Per Djursvoll; 69 – Ognjen Simić; 70 – Petar Radovanović; 71 – Štefan Baba; 72 – Boyan Vagalinski; 73 – Emmanuel Vega Román; 74 – Diego Miranda-Rojas; 75 – Robert Opran; 76 – Fabian Barria; 77 – Andreea Mirleneanu; 78 – Henrik Enghoff; 79 – Eszter Lazányi; 80 – Gregory Edgecombe.

The four-day scientific programme included an introductory lecture on myriapodology in Serbia, four plenary lectures, 43 oral presentations, and 40 poster presentations, covering a wide range of topics in myriapod research. A one-day congress excursion to important historical sites, including a boat ride, was organized midway through the congress. On the final evening, participants enjoyed a farewell party featuring a live rock band, “Planet Caravan”, and traditional Serbian cuisine.

This special issue of *Biologia Serbica* includes nine papers by 16 authors, presented at the 20th ICM. Four of these contributions are reviews. Among them, Antić provides a brief history of myriapodological research in Serbia, focusing on the last three decades and the contributions of the Belgrade Myriapodological School, while Tadler discusses hypotheses on the coevolution of genitalia in eugnathan millipedes. Completing the review category, Read delivers a comprehensive overview of faunistic studies of millipedes in the British Isles, and Martínez-Muñoz presents a thorough revision of the centipede fauna of Monterrey, Mexico, based on a literature review and re-examination of museum material, complete with taxonomic and nomenclatural notes and updated species records.

The remaining five papers are original research articles covering diverse myriapodological topics. These include taxonomic works, such as the descriptions of four new *Unixenus* species from Vietnam by Huynh and Veenstra and a redescription of *Lithobius demavendicus* Matic, 1969 from Iran by Stojanović et al., as well as a morphological study of cuticular surface microstructures in selected polydesmidan families by Enghoff. Finally, the issue features ecological and methodological studies, with Tuf et al. evaluating the significance of home composters as potential biodiversity refuges in urban habitats, and Irons and Snyder providing an assessment of fluorescent powder as a method for marking millipedes under laboratory and field conditions.

We warmly thank the Dean of the University of Belgrade – Faculty of Biology, the Ministry of Science, Technological Development and Innovation of the Republic of Serbia, Impala Travel Agency (Belgrade), and the staff of Danubia Park Hotel (Srebrno Jezero) for their support in organizing the congress.

Our sincere gratitude is extended to the editorial and production team of *Biologia Serbica* for enabling publication of this special issue and for their guidance and cooperation throughout the entire process, from manuscript submission to final publication.

Thanks are also due to all authors who contributed their work to the proceedings, as well as to all reviewers for their time, expertise, and invaluable evaluations of the submitted manuscripts.

Finally, the remaining members of the Organizing Committee and the student volunteers are acknowledged for their exceptional assistance, along with all participants and accompanying persons whose presence greatly enriched the congress.

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Guest editors