



Gerhard Yumitza

*leaving the swamp —
how ardent its farewell
to my rubber boots*

M. Kiauta

**TO PROFESSOR Dr GERHARD JURZITZA
ON HIS 70th BIRTHDAY**

Dear Gerhard,

Your 70th birthday means much more to the world odonatological community than a mere celebration of a landmark in the life of one of the most distinguished workers in our discipline. It is no exaggeration to say that without your initiatives, manifold input and continuous encouragement neither the SOCIETAS INTERNATIONALIS ODONATOLOGICA (S.I.O.), nor its mainstream journal, ODONATOLOGICA, could have ever reached their present level. Indeed it was only your enthusiasm to bring together the dragonfly workers of the world by means of an international journal, which greatly inspired the foundation of the organisation, and of this and some other S.I.O. periodicals. Whenever dark clouds threatened our community it was your determination, unshakable loyalty and wise advice that helped us to overcome all the difficulties so decisively.

Exactly four decades have passed since your first odonatological publication, in 1959. Since then, the development of odonate research in Germany (and not only in Germany!) has been largely influenced by your work. Your popular field guides, published in huge editions and in various languages, brought dragonflies and damselflies to the attention of countless European naturalists, and triggered and facilitated much of the faunistic research in Europe. The same is true of your matchless photographic work, based on the innovative macrophotographic techniques you have developed, and published in various European and non-European countries. Much of the modern odonatological research in Germany, Spain, Argentina, Chile and elsewhere has been initiated by you and is being continued by your young "students" and collaborators. The value and utility of numerous dragonfly books, in the Netherlands, Slovenia etc., has been much enhanced by the inclusion of your unique photographs.

For some years now you have lived a rather secluded life, rarely attending the international professional gatherings. But your home is open to all who need your help; there are many of them, coming to Karlsruhe from various European countries and from overseas, requiring your help in the taxonomy of the neotropical taxa, in photography, and (often enough) also assistance with the translation of technical papers into and from Spanish. Since the inception of the S.I.O. Iberian Regional Office, your work for its newsletter, NAVASIA, and for its translation programme has been indispensable

Needless to say, you are a Charter Member of S.I.O., and since the inception of the journals, a member of the Editorial Boards of ODONATOLOGICA and NOTULAE ODONATOLOGICAE. Likewise you stood at the cradle of the German odonatological Society (GdO). It was only your personal modesty that prevented you from accepting the S.I.O. presidentship, when you were nominated for the office in the 1980s.

*Your name has been perpetuated also in the world of dragonflies. Five new species, all from the New World, were introduced by you. With the appearance of the present issue, the Brazilian *Lestes jurzitzai* Muzon, 1994 is joined by *Drepanosticta jurzitzai* Hämäläinen (*Platystictidae*; Thailand), *Neoneura jurzitzai* Garrison (*Protoneuridae*; Brazil) and *Austrocordulia refracta jurzitzai* Theischinger (*Corduliidae*; Australia).*

Many thanks for all your work, help and friendship, and many happy returns, on behalf of the Editorial Board and S.I.O.,

yours ever,

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