

**A NOTE ON THE ODONATA COLLECTION OF THE REV. FATHER GABRIEL STROBL (1846-1925) IN THE BENEDICTINE ABBEY AT ADMONT, AUSTRIA**

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**Abstract** – A brief description is provided of a collection containing 62 European and 119 non-European spp., mostly from Austria and northern Italy, but also from various regions of Africa, Asia and the Americas. A thorough examination and the inclusion of records, where adequately detailed, into the respective national inventories is proposed.

**Introduction**

No doubt, Father Gabriel Strobl was among the most industrious naturalists of the concluding decades of the Habsburg Austro-Hungarian Empire. His large botanical and zoological collections are increasingly attracting the attention of specialists. In the odonatological world, however, his achievements have so far received but little attention.

The present note does not provide a taxonomic review of his collection; its sole objective is to draw attention to the valuable material in the Natural

History Museum of the Benedictine Abbey at Admont. The Museum and all its collections were assembled by Strobl singlehandedly between 1866 and 1910.

**Biographic summary**

Gabriel Strobl was born on 3 November 1846 in Unzmarkt, Upper Styria, and entered the Benedictine Monastery at Admont in 1866. Upon the completion of his theological studies, he graduated (1876) also in Natural History at the University of Innsbruck. From 1876-1887 he worked as a Natural History teacher at the monastic high schools in Seitenstetten and Melk, and was in 1887 appointed Director of the Benedictine Gymnasium at Admont. This gave him the opportunity to devote all his free time to the restoration of the ancient Natural History Museum of the Abbey, which had been completely destroyed by fire in 1865. In this position he continued until

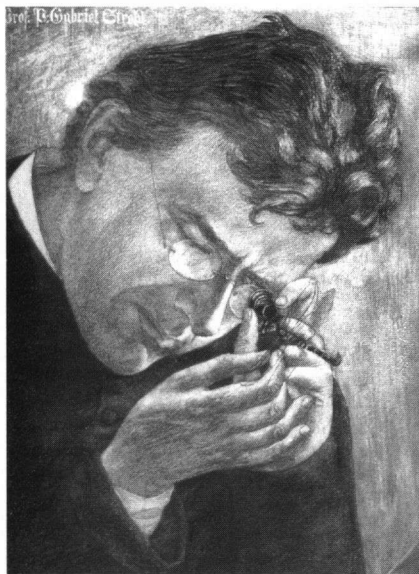
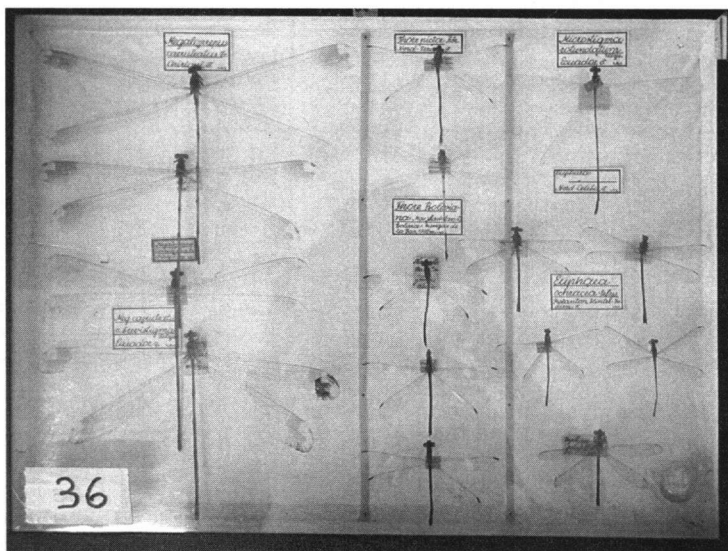


Fig. 1. Portrait of Strobl with a dragonfly; by A.M. Kurz-Gallenstein, 1901.

1910, when he suffered a stroke and became partially paralysed. He died on 15 March 1925.

Strobl had already become interested in botany while at high-school and did some research on the flora of the Kremsmünster region. In 1871 he undertook his first major botanical and entomological trip to the southern regions of the

Fig. 2. One of the cabinet boxes in Strobl's collection.



Empire (STROBL, 1872a, 1872b), followed by similar expeditions to southern Italy and Sicily, Spain, Dalmatia and Istria. During these, and on his countless minor collecting trips in Styria and elsewhere, he gathered material for the Museum, which he was able to supplement by systematic trading of specimens with fellow collectors, and by occasional purchases of various major collections (cf. STROBL, 1906a). By 1910, his entomological collections contained over 250,000 specimens, comprising over 50,000 species of most orders (MORGE, 1974b); all preserved, labelled and meticulously catalogued by himself. Subsequent to the annexation of Austria by Germany (1938), and along with all other property of the Abbey, the collections were confiscated and removed to the Styrian Natural History Museum, Joanneum, in Graz, from where they were returned to Admont in the course of 1962-1972 (MORGE, 1974a). Their present Curator is Dr Jürgen Götze.

Strobl was a prolific writer; for the bibliography see MORGE (1974b). Many of his over hundred publications (1865-1910), including several monographs and serial works in various fields of botany and systematic entomology, represent cornerstones in the respective fields of research. Particularly noteworthy are his *Flora of Sicily* and his comprehensive dipterological studies.





	<p><b>Exilopterus Neuronotus des Altimontia talina</b>  <i>Exilopterus</i> <i>Neuronotus</i> des Altimontia talina      I. <i>Exilopterus</i> <i>Neuronotus</i> des Altimontia talina      (Hb. p. 524-3 - m. p. 18 - 19 - f. g. 18)</p> <p><b>Exilopterus nebulosus</b> (Hb.)      Exilopterus nebulosus (Hb.)      Exilopterus nebulosus (Hb.)      Exilopterus nebulosus (Hb.)      Exilopterus nebulosus (Hb.)</p>	<p><i>Calopteryx</i> <i>calopteryx</i> (Hb.)      Calopteryx calopteryx (Hb.)      Calopteryx calopteryx (Hb.)      Calopteryx calopteryx (Hb.)      Calopteryx calopteryx (Hb.)</p>	<p><i>Calopteryx</i> <i>calopteryx</i> (Hb.)      Calopteryx calopteryx (Hb.)      Calopteryx calopteryx (Hb.)      Calopteryx calopteryx (Hb.)      Calopteryx calopteryx (Hb.)</p>
	<p><b>Acisoma panoyoides</b> (Hb.)      Acisoma panoyoides (Hb.)      Acisoma panoyoides (Hb.)      Acisoma panoyoides (Hb.)</p>	<p><b>Calopteryx atrata</b> Selys      Calopteryx atrata Selys      Calopteryx atrata Selys      Calopteryx atrata Selys</p>	<p><b>Calopteryx atrata</b> Selys      Calopteryx atrata Selys      Calopteryx atrata Selys      Calopteryx atrata Selys</p>
	<p><b>Brachythemis (Hb.) contaminata</b> (Hb.)      Brachythemis (Hb.) contaminata (Hb.)      Brachythemis (Hb.) contaminata (Hb.)      Brachythemis (Hb.) contaminata (Hb.)</p>	<p><b>Umonca longitigra</b> Selys      Umonca longitigra Selys      Umonca longitigra Selys      Umonca longitigra Selys</p>	<p><b>Umonca longitigra</b> Selys      Umonca longitigra Selys      Umonca longitigra Selys      Umonca longitigra Selys</p>
	<p><b>Leptotemis Labriace</b> (Hb.)      Leptotemis Labriace (Hb.)      Leptotemis Labriace (Hb.)      Leptotemis Labriace (Hb.)</p>	<p><b>Neurocypha</b>      Neurocypha      Neurocypha      Neurocypha</p>	<p><b>Neurocypha</b>      Neurocypha      Neurocypha      Neurocypha</p>
	<p><b>Leptotemis nebulosa</b> (Hb.)      Leptotemis nebulosa (Hb.)      Leptotemis nebulosa (Hb.)      Leptotemis nebulosa (Hb.)</p>	<p><b>Neurocypha</b>      Neurocypha      Neurocypha      Neurocypha</p>	<p><b>Neurocypha</b>      Neurocypha      Neurocypha      Neurocypha</p>
	<p><b>Leptotemis (Hb.)</b>      Leptotemis (Hb.)      Leptotemis (Hb.)      Leptotemis (Hb.)</p>	<p><b>Neurocypha</b>      Neurocypha      Neurocypha      Neurocypha</p>	<p><b>Neurocypha</b>      Neurocypha      Neurocypha      Neurocypha</p>
	<p><b>Leptotemis (Hb.)</b>      Leptotemis (Hb.)      Leptotemis (Hb.)      Leptotemis (Hb.)</p>	<p><b>Neurocypha</b>      Neurocypha      Neurocypha      Neurocypha</p>	<p><b>Neurocypha</b>      Neurocypha      Neurocypha      Neurocypha</p>

Fig. 3c. See page 16.

Aside from his autobiography (STROBL, 1886), biographical and critical accounts of his work are to be found in, among others, CZERNY (1925), DUSMET Y ALONSO (1919), KIEFER (1941), MORGE (1974b), and NONVEILLER (1999).

#### Odonatological work

Father Strobl was an entomological polymath rather than a specialized odonatologist, though he collected dragonflies diligently wherever he went. His sole publication in this field, devoted mostly to the fauna of Styria and Lower Austria, and containing some records also from the surroundings of Trieste and Gorizia (now in Italy) and Slovenia, was published in 1906. Some of the identifications were checked by F. Klapálek (STROBL, 1906; see also KIAUTA, 2003).

Strobl's odonate collection at Admont is substantial; it contains 62 European and 119 non-European species, including a few larvae; all pinned, almost all set. The entire material is catalogued. The Curator, Dr J. Götze, kindly sent me colour photographs (17×13 cm) of 14 cabinet boxes, containing 763 specimens (cf. Fig. 2), and copies of pages 582-583 and 775 from Strobl's handwritten Catalogue, which are reproduced here, though much of the script is too small to be legible when reproduced in this reduced size.

Strobl records exact details of the locations where his specimens were found. They originate mostly from Austria (Styria, Vienna, Innsbruck, Vorarlberg), Italy (Southern Tyrol, Friuli-Venezia Giulia), and Slovenia (Radgona, Zidani most). Similar data are available for specimens from Dalmatia (e.g. Dubrovnik, Šibenik), though these probably originate from the large collection of P. Novak, purchased by STROBL (1906a). Some specimens are from Spain, Germany (Westphalia, Thuringia), etc.

The non-European material covers Africa (Cameron, Egypt, Madagascar, East Africa), Asia (Celebes, Ceylon, India, Japan, Java, Sumatra, Tonkin), North America (Massachusetts, North Carolina, Texas), and South America (Bolivia,

Guiana, Chile, Cuba, Mexico, Peru, Venezuela). In most cases only the country/island names are stated.

It is imperative to examine the collection thoroughly, to check the identifications, and to include the Austrian, Italian and Slovenian localities in the respective national inventories.

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**References** – CZERNY, L., 1925, *Konowia* 4: 376-381; – DUSMET Y ALONSO, J.M., 1919, *Boln Soc. ent. Esp.* 2(7/8): 161-195; – KIAUTA, B., 2003, *Erjavcica* 15: 1-6; – KIEFER, H., 1941, *Z. wien. ent. Ver.* 20(8): 186-191; – MORGE, G., 1974a, *Beitr. Ent.* 24(Sonderh.): 23-40; – 1974b, *ibidem*: 41-63; – NONVEILLER, G., 1999, *The pioneers of the research on the insects of Dalmatia*, Croat. Nat. Hist. Mus., Zagreb; – STROBL, G., 1872a, *Eine Frühlingsreise nach den Süden: Reise-Eindrücke aus Südsteiermark, Krain, dem kroatischen und istrianischen Küstenlande und den Inseln des Quarnero [...]*, Styria, Graz; – 1872b, *Verh. zool.-bot. Ges. Wien* 22: 577-616, 743; – 1886, *Oest. bot. Z.* 36(7): 217-225, portrait excl.; – 1906a, *Das Naturhistorische Museum der Benedictiner-Abtei Admont in Steiermark*, Benedict.-Abtei, Admont; – 1906b, *Mitt. naturw. Ver. Steiermark* 42: 225-266; – TOMASCHEK, J., G. MORGE & U. HIMMELSTOSS, 1990, *Benediktinerstift Admont: Sehenswürdigkeiten und Sammlungen*, Benedikt.-Stift, Admont.

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