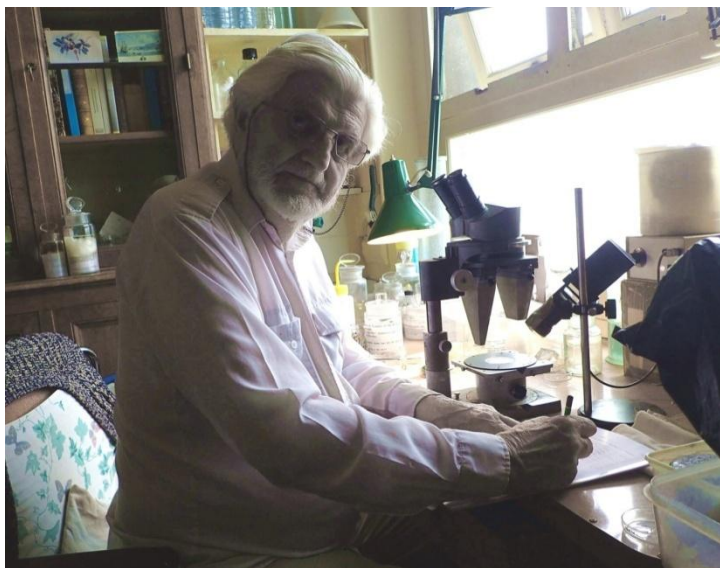


Jean-Paul Mauriès-Belou: Myriapodologist and Gentleman

December 1st, 1934 - October 3rd, 2022

Jean-Paul Mauriès, our highly estimated colleague, and more than a good friend, passed away in Guérande (Loire-Atlantique, France) on Monday 3 October 2022 at the age of 88. He died peacefully among his close relatives and family after a long and unfortunately painful illness and a long time far away from his beloved specimens, collections, researches and laboratory. His funeral was held in Paris (Funerarium of the Père-Lachaise Cemetery). He is survived by his two daughters, sons-in-law and grandchildren.



Jean-Paul Mauriès in 2017: Paris, Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, laboratory Zoology-Arthropods.

[Photo by Jean-Jacques Geoffroy]

Jean-Paul Mauriès-Belou was born in Albi (Tarn, France) 1st December 1934. He became a biology student at the Faculty of Sciences, University of Toulouse where he obtained his Licence 'és Sciences Naturelles' (SPCN, Geology, Zoology and Botany) in 1953-1956.

He did his military service from 1960 to 1962, partly in Algeria, and in the meantime became Assistant researcher at the CNRS from 1957 to 1966, a period during which he became more and more interested and involved in myriapod biology and systematics, notably in millipede taxonomy and distribution in the Pyrenean area.

In 1966, he moved to Paris and became Assistant-Researcher at the Laboratory Zoology-Arthropods, Muséum national

d'Histoire naturelle, directed by Prof. Max Vachon, then obtained the ranks of 'Maître-Assistant' 2nd class in 1974, 'Maître-Assistant' 1st class in 1979 and finally became 'Maître de Conférences Universitaire' in 1986 until his retirement at the MNHN.

He played a major role in myriapodology through his work on millipede systematics; he contributed to the original descriptions of many taxa (species, genera and families) and he rapidly became one of the main worldwide specialists of the order Chordeumatida. Beside his most exciting and passionate researches at the MNHN, he was during many years the very active curator of the collection "Myriapodes et Onychophores" of the Muséum in Paris, for which he permanently gave time for enrichment, managing and scientific updating, even after his retirement as an honorary researcher.

In 1968, he became, together with Prof. Jean-Marie Demange (Muséum, Paris) and Herr Prof.-Dr. Otto Kraus (Hamburg, Germany), and quickly joined by John Gordon Blower (Manchester, UK), a co-founder of the Centre International de Myriapodologie, the **CIM**, today CIM-International Society for Myriapodology, an amazing event for advances and relationships in Myriapodology. In collaboration with Monique Nguyen Duy-Jacquemin and Jean-Jacques Geoffroy, he contributed to the functioning of the permanent CIM-Secretariat, Bulletin of the CIM publishing and co-organisation of international congresses of myriapodology, held every three years. Jean-Paul attended many international congresses of myriapodology (ICM), he contributed to the organization of the 1st and 9th ICM in Paris and he was formally elected honorary member of the CIM society.

After J.-M. Demange's retirement, he contributed also to the annual course on venomous and poisonous

animals, given on millipedes and centipedes at the Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle. He published several papers on this subject in books dealing with venomous function.

As a specialist of myriapod biology and systematics, his work was mainly devoted to millipede taxonomy, in France and in several European countries or regions (Switzerland, Balkans, Iberian Peninsula, Corsica...) but also in many countries through the world: North Africa, Western Africa, Indo-Pacific, Caribbean, French Guiana, Brazil, Venezuela, China, South-East Asia, etc. Most of his publications are related to edaphic species in different habitats, many of them taxa strictly endemic and highly adapted to extreme environments in high mountains or in deep subterranean systems (MSS or deep caves). He contributed to subterranean biology via the publication of articles on troglobitic myriapods in encyclopaedic books: *Mémoires de Biospéologie*, *Encyclopaedia Biospeologica*, *Encyclopaedia of Cave and Karst Science*. These studies reveal the presence of species of an ancient lineage and paleobiogeographic interest; some of them deserving obviously protection and conservation measures. Most of the time, the rigorous descriptions of species created by Jean-Paul were wonderfully illustrated by his own handmade drawings, witness to his undeniable scientific drawing talent.

At the very end of his life, when illness had kept him away from his research and laboratory, the publication of very last studies in press and the expected discovery of species new for France helped to bring him some renewed joy and deep satisfaction for his job well done. A recent paper published by European colleagues recognizes the quality of his work by creating a new chordeumatidan genus that will honour him for ever: *Maurienseuma* Antic & Spelda, 2022. Jean-Paul Mauriès leaves us as a legacy of an immense quantity of unpublished documents, such as impressive study files on diplopods of Cameroon, French Guiana and, above all, Chordeumatida, which will continue to be of immense use to researchers in the future.

His strong and friendly relationships with his native region of Toulouse remained intact and he published many major taxonomic papers in the journal *Bulletin de la Société d'Histoire Naturelle de Toulouse*. He was an active member of several other scientific societies in which he held some various responsibilities: Société de Biogéographie, Société Zoologique de France, Société Française de Systématique, Société Française d'Ecologie, Société Internationale de Biospéologie - International Society for Subterranean Biology. In addition, he was an elected member of the Board of Directors of the Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle and he was for a time the temporary head of the laboratory Zoology-Arthropods.

In a completely different context, our complicit friendship was fully expressed within the CNRS choir, of which he was for years a strong pillar of the bass section. He performed in several concerts in the role of an amateur but as a solid soloist with a warm and deep voice. In this regard, the walls of the laboratory, which have memories, still remember the echoes of his organ starting some traditional Occitan songs:

Quand lo boièr ven de laurar

Quand lo boièr ven de laurar

Planta son aigulhada,

A, i, ò, ú,

Planta son aigulhada, A !

We send our deepest sympathy to his two daughters Nathalie and Magali, their husbands and his grandchildren. Jean-Paul had survived his beloved wife Michèle by some years.

Today, millipedes are in mourning, they lost a good friend, as are we. This great loss will be felt very sadly by the members of the international community of Myriapodologists. He will be remembered by many as a very good friend and a gentleman.

Here's to you, dear friend Jean-Paul.

Jean-Jacques Geoffroy, Paris, October 2023