

Preface

This special volume of *Acta Theriologica* presents the proceedings of the fifth meeting of the International *Sorex araneus* Cytogenetics Committee (ISACC) held at Białowieża, Poland, from 17th to 21st August 1999. The meeting was organized by Dr Jan M. Wójcik (Mammal Research Institute, Polish Academy of Sciences, Białowieża, Poland) on behalf of the ISACC. This meeting was part of a series of international symposiums held every three years. It was organized in the spirit of former successful meetings in Oxford (United Kingdom, 1987), in Lausanne and Arzier (Switzerland, 1990), in Brno and Dolní Věstonice (Czech Republic, 1993), and in Uppsala and Norr Malma (Sweden, 1996).

Thirty-three participants from eight countries (Czech Republic, France, Poland, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine and United Kingdom) attended the meeting. Contributions were presented on the following topics related to the evolution of shrews (mainly within the *Sorex araneus* group): (i) chromosome geography, phylogeny and chromosome evolution, (ii) hybrid zones, hybrid fertility and gene flow, (iii) gene mapping and genetic markers, and (iv) morphometric variation and habitat preferences.

The papers in this issue have been peer reviewed according to the requirements of *Acta Theriologica*. They demonstrate the strength of research in the field of shrew evolution and provide a valuable reference of the most current work being conducted.

The next ISACC meeting will be held in Paris, France in August 2002, and will be organized by Dr Vitaly T. Volobouev.

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Jeremy B. SEARLE and Jan M. WÓJCIK

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