

AWARDS

CBS-KNAW Fungal Biodiversity Centre Awards

On the second day of the “One Fungus = Which Genes” symposium in Amsterdam on Thursday 11 April 2013, the CBS-KNAW Fungal Biodiversity Centre presented its two prestigious awards. The awards are made at irregular intervals by the institute following discussions by its senior staff. This is the fourth time these awards have been made, and the citations were read, and the presentation of certificates made, by the Centre’s Director, Pedro W. Crous.

Johanna Westerdijk Award: Martha Christensen

Awarded on special occasions to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the culture collection of the CBS Fungal Biodiversity Centre, marking a distinguished career in mycology. Nominees for the award will be evaluated on the basis of quality, originality, and quantity of their contributions to the collection, and on the basis of associated mycological research in general.

Following graduate work at the University of Wisconsin, Martha Christensen accepted a faculty position in the Department of Botany at the University of Wyoming and remained in Laramie until her retirement back to Madison WI in 2003. Her primary research interest throughout her career has been to search for ecological patterns among the soil microfungi that can be isolated from native plant communities. In her view, new species descriptions and

substantive contributions in *Aspergillus* and *Penicillium* taxonomy have been essential tools in her determination to describe and understand soil microfungal communities both qualitatively and in terms of the relative prominence of the co-existing taxa.

In the course of that pursuit, she with students and colleagues isolated and examined soil fungi from more than 100 native plant communities, including desert, grassland, forest, tundra and bog communities, in five US states. Also, in connection with holiday trips overseas, she’s sampled native soils in Switzerland, Namibia, Peru, and Fair Isle. The “Christensen Soil Microfungal Collection” (www.moldsforyou.org), consisting of approximately 2000 cultures, is now a part of the CBS Fungal Biodiversity Centre. Accessioned strains can be located in the CBS database using either the published and permanent WSF or RMF culture number or the original published name.

Martha’s non-professional activities include travel, photography, and playing



Martha Christensen.

viola in string quartets. Because of her fondness for playing and the scarcity of violists in the four Midwestern states she’s lived in, Martha claims to have played in 13 different community orchestras, including the Panhandle Symphony of western Nebraska!

Josef Adolf von Arx Award: Kerry O'Donnell

Awarded on special occasions to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to taxonomic research of fungal biodiversity, marking a distinguished career in mycology. Nominees for the award will be evaluated on the basis of quality, originality, and quantity of their contributions in the field of fungal taxonomy.

It is no exaggeration to state that Kerry O’Donnell’s name is universally known within our field, especially in phytomycology, and specifically in the *Fusarium* community. Kerry completed his post-graduate studies at ARS-USDA, Peoria (*Mucorales*), Michigan State University (*Zygomycetes*), the University of Minnesota (ultrastructure of nuclear division in rusts and smuts), Washington University in

St Louis (medical mycology), and the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (molecular biology of the cell cycle) before relocating to ARS-USDA, Peoria, where he has studied *Fusarium* molecular systematics and evolution for more than 20 years. In the process, Kerry has generated thousands of multigene DNA datasets of *Fusarium* species, and also set up online blast tools such as FUSARIUM-ID, and *Fusarium* MLST to help others identify these organisms.

He has published more than 160 scientific articles in diverse areas including cell and molecular biology, molecular systematics, phylogenetics, evolutionary genetics, and fungal genomics. Several of these papers have received hundreds of citations to date.

Kerry O’Donnell has received many awards, including the USDA-ARS Administrator’s Postdoc Awards,



Kerry O’Donnell receiving his award from the Director of the CBS-KNAW, Pedro Crous.

Alexopoulos Award for Research from the Mycological Society of America (MSA), and the Dr Hiratsuka Award from the Mycological Society of Japan.

He has been elected a Fellow of the MSA, and has recently also received the Distinguished Mycologist Award from the MSA. He has acted as an editor for

Mycologia, *Mycoscience*, *Fungal Biology*, and *Mycological Progress*. Similar to von Arx, Kerry O'Donnell has also moved the goalposts in fungal taxonomic research.

PERSONALIA

Richard P. Korf – Mi-shou

Richard “Dick” Korf celebrated his 88th birthday on 28 May 2013. He has had a long association with the Institute of Microbiology of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing, since his first visit there in 1981. Further, he has done much to promote Chinese mycology and increase the awareness of mycologists in general to Chinese work, particularly through the publication of major books through *Mycotaxon*, of which he is the founder. He has served on the editorial board of *Mycosystema*, published by the Institute, since its inception in 1987. Just like *Mycotaxon*, which was initiated by Dick in 1974, *Mycosystema* has gone from strength to strength and developed into the premier Chinese journal in mycology, mainly publishing papers in English. Similarly, the Institute has now gained recognition as the State Key Laboratory of Mycology (see *IMA Fungus* 3 (2): (8), June 2012).

¹Further information about Richard P. Korf's contribution to mycology is given in the citation accompanying the award of the second IMA Ainsworth Medal in 2010 (see *IMA Fungus* 1 (2): (15)–(16), December 2010).



Sanshi Imai Memorial Discomycete Workshop and Foray, IMC3, Nikko, Japan, 20–27 August 1983. Left to right: “Dick” Korf, Linda Kohn, Trond Schumacher, and a Japanese colleague.

In China, an 88th birthday is regarded as particularly special, and those that reach it are called “Mi-shou”. In order to honour Dick's attainment of “Mi-shou” status, the June issue of *Mycosystema* is appropriately dedicated to him¹. It comprises 17 papers by his students, collaborators, and admirers, mostly reflecting his primary interest

in discomycetes, but others concern pyrenomycete groups.

IMA Fungus wishes to add its congratulations to those of the Chinese mycologists and contributors to the special issue. Long may he continue to facilitate and enjoy mycology!



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