

## Pierre Compère: a personal tribute

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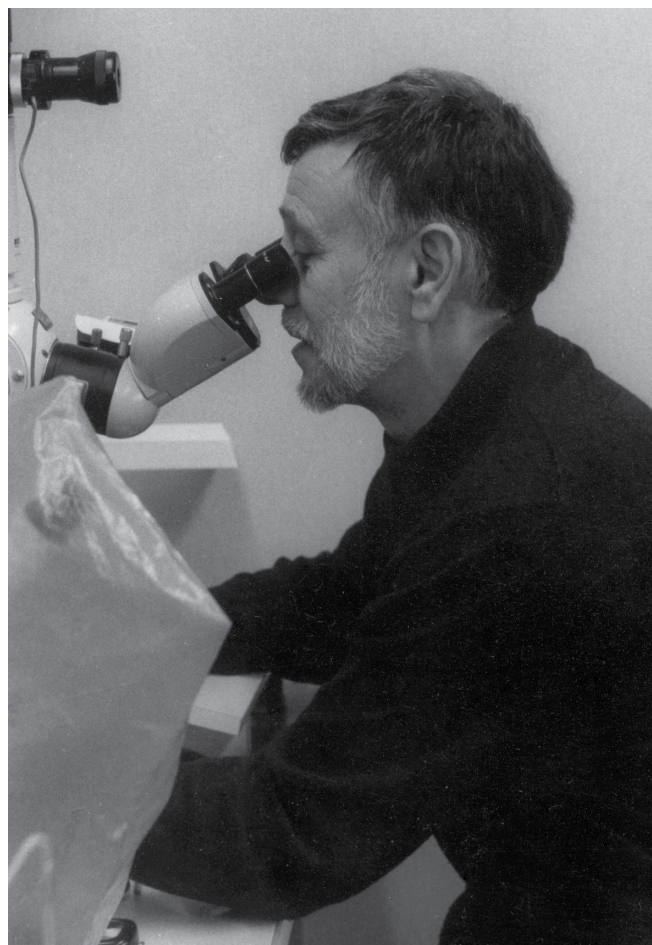
Associate editor

Pierre Compère, one of the most distinguished Belgian phycologists, is celebrating November this year his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. This current issue of *Plant Ecology and Evolution* is produced in collaboration with friends and colleagues of Pierre to honour and celebrate a scientist whose knowledge, friendship and always kind advice influenced so many phycologists, not only in Belgium, but in the entire world. On the occasion of his retirement in 1999, several overviews of his career were published (Ector & Hoffmann 2000, Fabri & Symoens 2000). The latter one was the opening paper of a special issue of *Systematics and Geography of Plants*, published on the occasion of his retirement.

The first time I met Pierre personally was almost twenty years ago, in December 1995. A strike of the French railway company forced me and my colleague Luc Denys to find an alternative way to get to the French-speaking Diatomist meeting in Amiens. A colleague from the university of Louvain-la-Neuve offered to take us and Pierre in his car. Up to then, I vaguely knew Pierre only from his papers, sometimes used in my research. The participation in Amiens was the start of a long series of meetings and conferences we attended together, even continuing today. But for me it was also the start of a warm friendship with a remarkable person. In 1999, Pierre was a member of my PhD jury, a duty he fulfilled meticulously for a large number of Belgian and African phycologists such as Louis Beyens (1982), Balthasar Mpawenayo (1998), Anicet Golama Swana Kaketa (1992), Wim Vyverman (1990), Christine Cocquyt (1997), Koen Sabbe (1997) and Allasane Ouattara (2000).

Despite being retired for already fifteen years, Pierre remains active as phycologist. Twice a week, he joins us at the Botanic Garden Meise not only to continue his research on diatom taxonomy, but also to fulfill his editorial duties. Apart from being a fulltime researcher, Pierre has always been involved during his career as editor of several journals. For more than thirty years (1969–2001), he served as editor-in-chief of the journal of the Royal Botanical Society of Belgium, the *Bulletin de la Société Royale de Botanique de Belgique*. It was renewed under his editorship, the title changing into *Belgian Journal of Botany*. Our journal now continues this title. As such, the publication of this special issue of *Plant Ecology and Evolution* is a welcome extra way to thank Pierre for so many years of dedication to our journal.

This current issue of *Plant Ecology and Evolution* reflects the wide phycological interest that Pierre showed during his entire career. There are contributions on almost every



Pierre Compère at the microscope in the National Botanic Garden of Belgium (1990).

group Pierre studied as he published himself not only on a broad variety of algological groups such as Cyanophyceae, Chrysophyceae, Euglenophyceae, Chlorobiota and most of all Bacillariophyceae, but also on various nomenclatural issues. The paper by Bogaerts et al. gives an overview of all the species he described and the location of his types whereas Golubic & Wilmotte illustrate Pierre's role in nomenclatural discussions. Several papers honour Pierre by naming a new species after him: *Cymatopleura comperei* (in Cocquyt & Jahn), *Halamphora compereana* (in Van de Vijver et al.), *Micrasterias compereana* (in Neustupa et al.) or *Navicula*

*pierre-comperei* (in Hoffmann & Lange-Bertalot) and *Planothidium comperei* (in N'Guessan et al.).

We hope that Pierre will accept this volume of *Plant Ecology and Evolution* as a tribute to acknowledge his great help, support, advice and encouragement to several generations of phycologists in Belgium and worldwide who share Pierre's interest and sense of curiosity about algae around the world.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY DATA

Supplementary data are available in pdf at *Plant Ecology and Evolution*, Supplementary Data Site (<http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/botbel/plecevo.supp-data>), and consist of a

full list of publications of Pierre Compère, completing the list published by Fabri & Symoens (1990) with his non-phylogenetic publications and works that appeared after the year 2000.

#### REFERENCES

- Ector L., Hoffmann L. (2000) Hommage à Pierre Compère à l'occasion de sa retraite. *Cryptogamie, Algologie* 21: 201–211. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0181-1568\(01\)80002-7](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0181-1568(01)80002-7)
- Fabri R., Symoens J.J. (2000) Pierre Compère, de la carte de végétation du Bas-Congo au secrétariat du comité pour la nomenclature des algues. *Systematics and Geography of Plants* 70: 227–233.