

PREFACE

In every generation a few special scientists emerge whose ground-breaking works have a major impact on the development of their disciplines. Their interesting ideas and novel approaches become the standard for the researchers that follow. Such a scientist is Danièle Guinot. Working in taxonomy, a discipline incorrectly considered by many as “old fashioned”, she has helped reawaken interest on the systematics of brachyuran decapods crustaceans, the true crabs. There has certainly been nothing “old fashioned” about her work. She has been a leader in the discovery and use of new morphological characters for recent taxa, including the use of reproductive structures and sperm, and this in turn has led her to develop new ideas on how they should be classified. In fossils, she has pioneered the use of sternal morphology, and has contributed substantially to how we study them. In addition, she has been one of the leaders in linking fossil and recent fauna in her systematic analyses. In these and many other ways, she has significantly helped to redefine the study of the complete evolutionary process in crabs.

We therefore decided that it was timely that we honour Danièle, our esteemed colleague and friend. For decades, she has gracefully and unselfishly volunteered to give us valuable advice, provided us with references, drawings and photographs, corrected our French abstracts and our long manuscripts, and patiently listened to our hypotheses, helping us to develop and improve many of them. This volume was born out of our admiration for Danièle’s immense contributions to her discipline. We wrote our contributions thinking of her, working those long hours in her small office and worrying about the MNHN collections. A total of 35 of her colleagues have contributed to this volume, submitting papers on those aspects of the Brachyura to which Danièle, herself, has significantly contributed — taxonomy, evolution, morphology, palaeontology and general biology of crabs. This volume is but a small tribute to a highly respected colleague and friend from the active band of researchers that she has helped so much over the years. *Nos très sincères remerciements Danièle !*

February 2010, *Guest Editors for the present volume,*

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