

*Special Issue on the Occasion of the 80th Birthday of A. J. (Sandy) Bruce —
50 Years of Shrimping in the Indo-West Pacific*

EDITORIAL

A. J. (Sandy) Bruce was fascinated by animal life from his schooldays in southern England (and probably earlier), with interests in birds and freshwater crustaceans which, after completing his medical degree ('Dr' Bruce) and then compulsory National Service in Glasgow, led Sandy to join EAMFRO (East African Marine Fisheries Research Organisation) in Zanzibar in 1959. This was his first exposure to the tropics and the rich world of coral reefs and, most importantly of course, their as yet hardly studied shrimp fauna. This was the start of an enduring fascination with Pontoninae and other shrimp taxa, which so far (production is not declining) has resulted in the description of one new family, 63+ new genera and 250+ new species, totalling approximately 7% of global shrimp diversity. Other crustacean groups also received attention, especially in the early years, with regular contributions appearing on the taxonomy of Brachyura, Stomatopoda, Isopoda, Rhizocephala, Mysidacea, and all major lobster groups. In a scientific career spanning over five decades, Sandy has produced in excess of 300 papers, routinely publishing 6-8 titles per year, and in some years as many as 12-14. Remarkably, until 1975 when Sandy took up the directorship at Heron Island Research Station, his taxonomic research was done almost entirely at home in his 'spare time'.

Of course, Sandy did not achieve this by staying in fisheries research in Zanzibar. As momentum built towards the Zanzibar revolution in 1962, he (and his family) relocated to the Fisheries Research Station in Hong Kong, leaving three years later. After a short spell in the Seychelles and as part of the U.S.-led Western Indian Ocean Expedition, Sandy arrived in 1967 in Queensland as head of the planned CSIRO Moreton Bay marine laboratory. With the buildings still not built in 1969, Sandy (and his wandering family) returned to East Africa and to EAMFRO in Mombasa in Kenya. A brief interlude followed in the U.K. in 1974, but the lure of tropical shrimps saw Sandy back in Queensland in 1975, this time as Director of the Heron Island Research Station. Finally in 1981, Sandy became the Curator of Crustacea at the Museum of Arts and Sciences of the Northern Territory, climbing to the lofty heights of Deputy Director (Research) in 1987, but still maintaining considerable research activity as evidenced by his productivity during this period. Following retirement in 1994, Sandy relocated again, this time

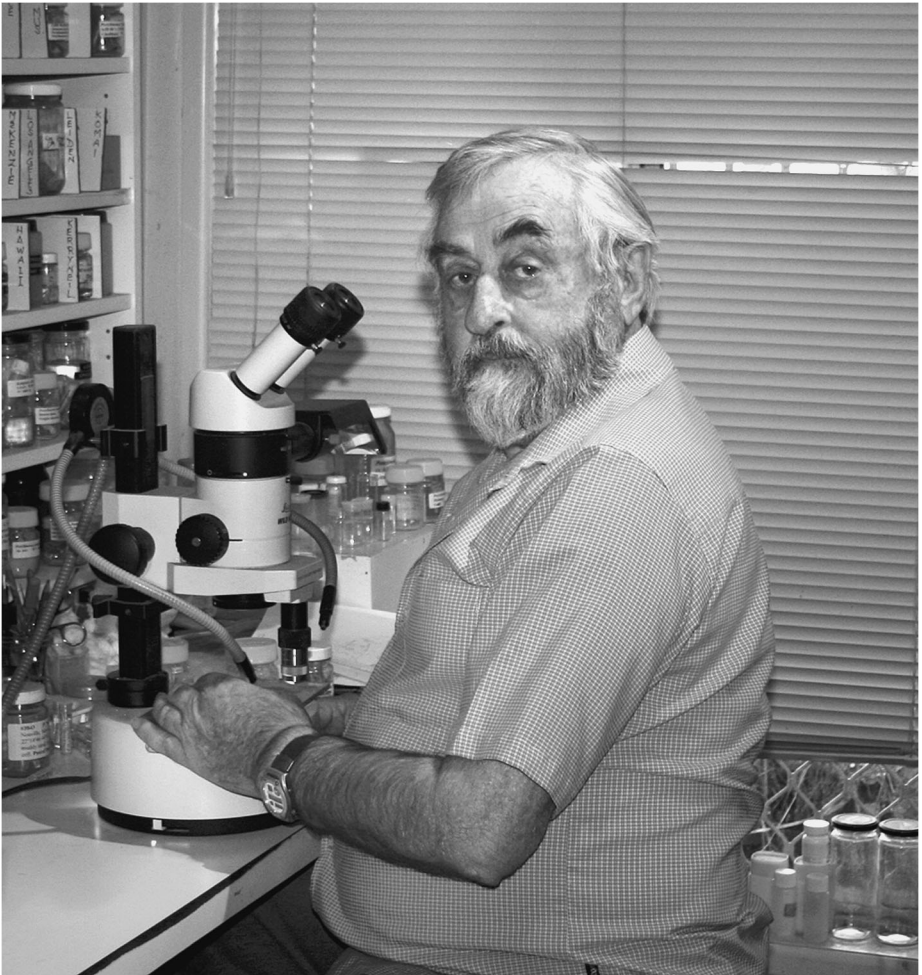


Fig. 1. Sandy Bruce working at home in Helensvale (October 2008). [Photo: Niel and Sylvie Bruce.]

to Helensvale in south-eastern Queensland, working from home, but visiting the Queensland Museum every Friday as an Honorary Researcher.

Sandy's contribution to shrimp taxonomy is an enduring legacy, not just for taxonomists, but for anybody wanting to study the ecology, biology, biogeography, in fact all aspects of biology and natural history of pontonine shrimps. It is simply not possible to arrive at a name for a collected specimen or photo, without consulting at least one (often several) of his papers or seeking his advice on the matter, always prompt and ever helpful. It is equally remarkable that throughout such a long career, Sandy has mainly shied away from any other line of enquiry than alpha-taxonomy, leaving other aspects of systematics to others.

It is a pleasure for us to dedicate this Special Issue of “Crustaceana” to Sandy in the year of his eightieth birthday (on 25 February 2009), which by all accounts has not diminished his passion for shrimps. Sandy is simply the most productive shrimp taxonomist ever to have graced our planet and likely to ever be in this age of declining alpha-level taxonomy.

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