



Eponyms in honour of the Royals Astrid and Léopold III of Belgium

Yves Samyn*, Brigitte Segers, Jackie Van Goethem

Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences, Vautierstraat 29, 1000 Brussels, Belgium

*corresponding author: yves.samyn@naturalsciences.be

What are eponyms?

In taxonomy, eponyms are nouns formed in honour of a person; often this is in recognition of the collector (Fellers, 2014) the discoverer, the fellow taxonomist, etc. Charles Darwin for instance has 301 eponyms (Miličić et al., 2011).

Why searching these eponyms?

Routine curation of the RBINS collections revealed many Léopold/Astrid eponyms. This enables us to:

- Better understand the history of the RBINS and its collections
- Showcase the feasibility to recover types in the RBINS collections (Digit3-BelSPO project)
- Showcase the importance of having original publications coupled to natural history collections as primary sources
- Showcase the 'limits' of internet aggregators such as the 'Index to Organism Names (ION)'

Results :

Research sources	as search term 'leopold*'	Léopold III eponyms	unresolved LIII eponyms	as search term 'astrid*'	Astrid eponyms	unresolved Astrid eponyms
ION	358	114	4	87	26	0
Literature & collections ¹	N.A.	26		N.A.	1	0
IPNI ²	110	1	6	0	0	0
Total		141			27	

To be an eponym or not to be an eponym? That's the question...

Each potential eponym was verified and was checked against its original publication:

- The chiton *Acanthochites leopoldi* Leloup, 1933 is dedicated to Léopold III, but the ostracod *Nesidea leopoldi* Doeglas, 1931 is a misspelling of *N. leupoldi* Doeglas, 1931 and thus, not dedicated to Léopold III.
- *Catostomus leopoldi* Siebert & Minckley, 1986 is a fish named after Aldo Leopold.
- *Diaphus Astridae* Giltay, 1929 is a species dedicated to princess Astrid unlike *Temnophylloides astridula* Henry, 1939 in which the name indicates the absence of stridulation of this locust.

Original description

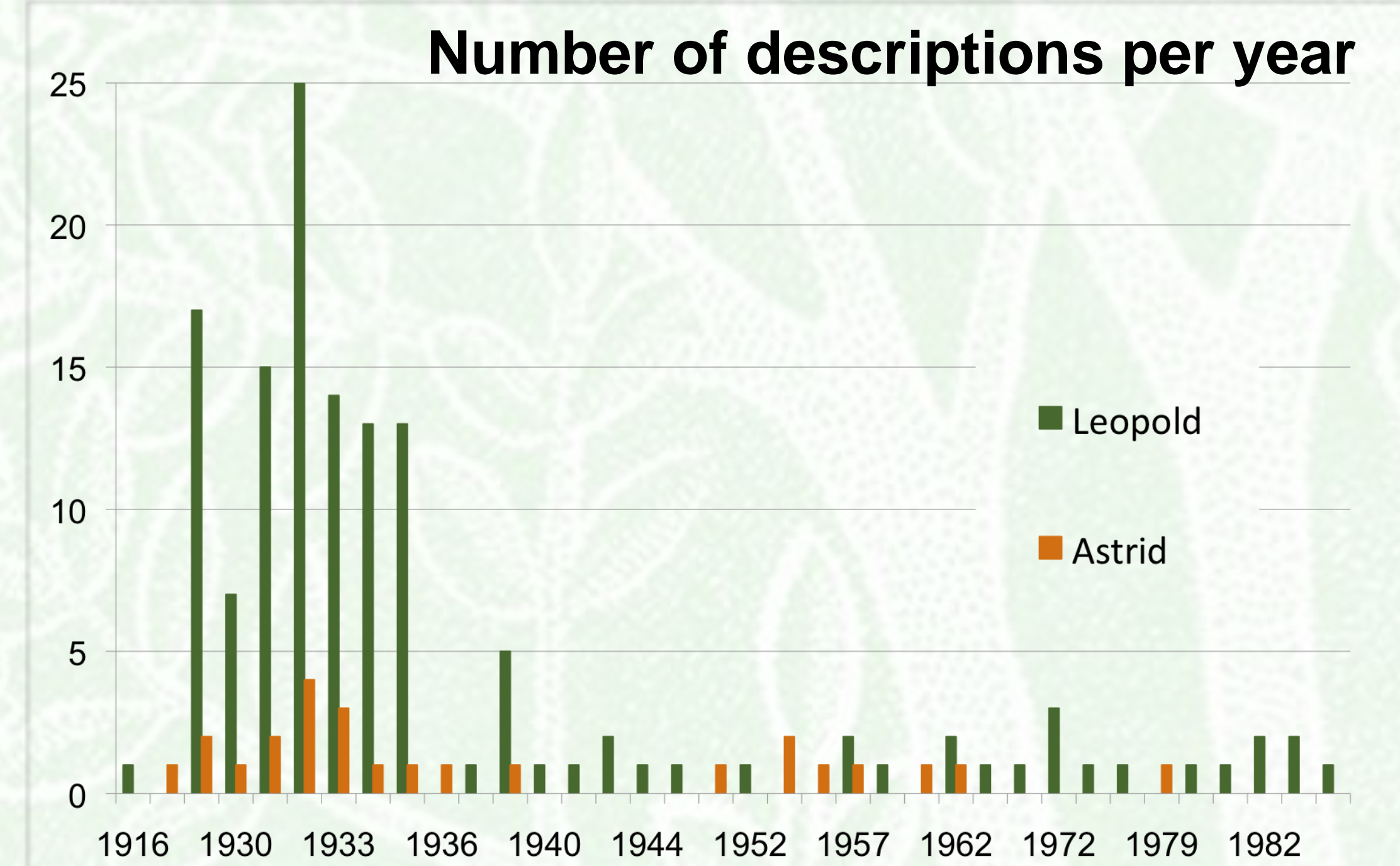
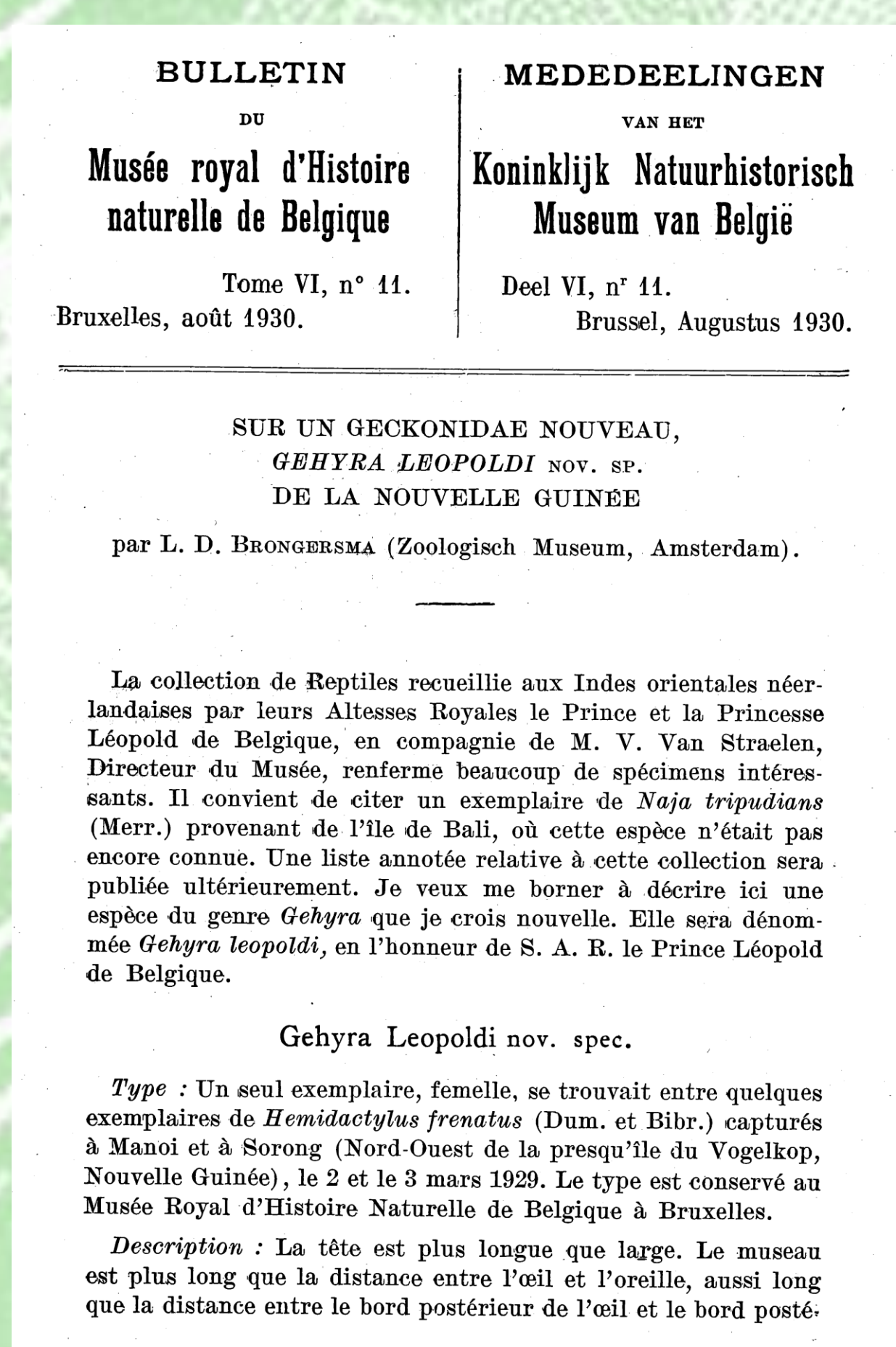
Study of the original description is the only way to confirm the validity of the species name and to verify the veracity of the eponym.

Types and collections

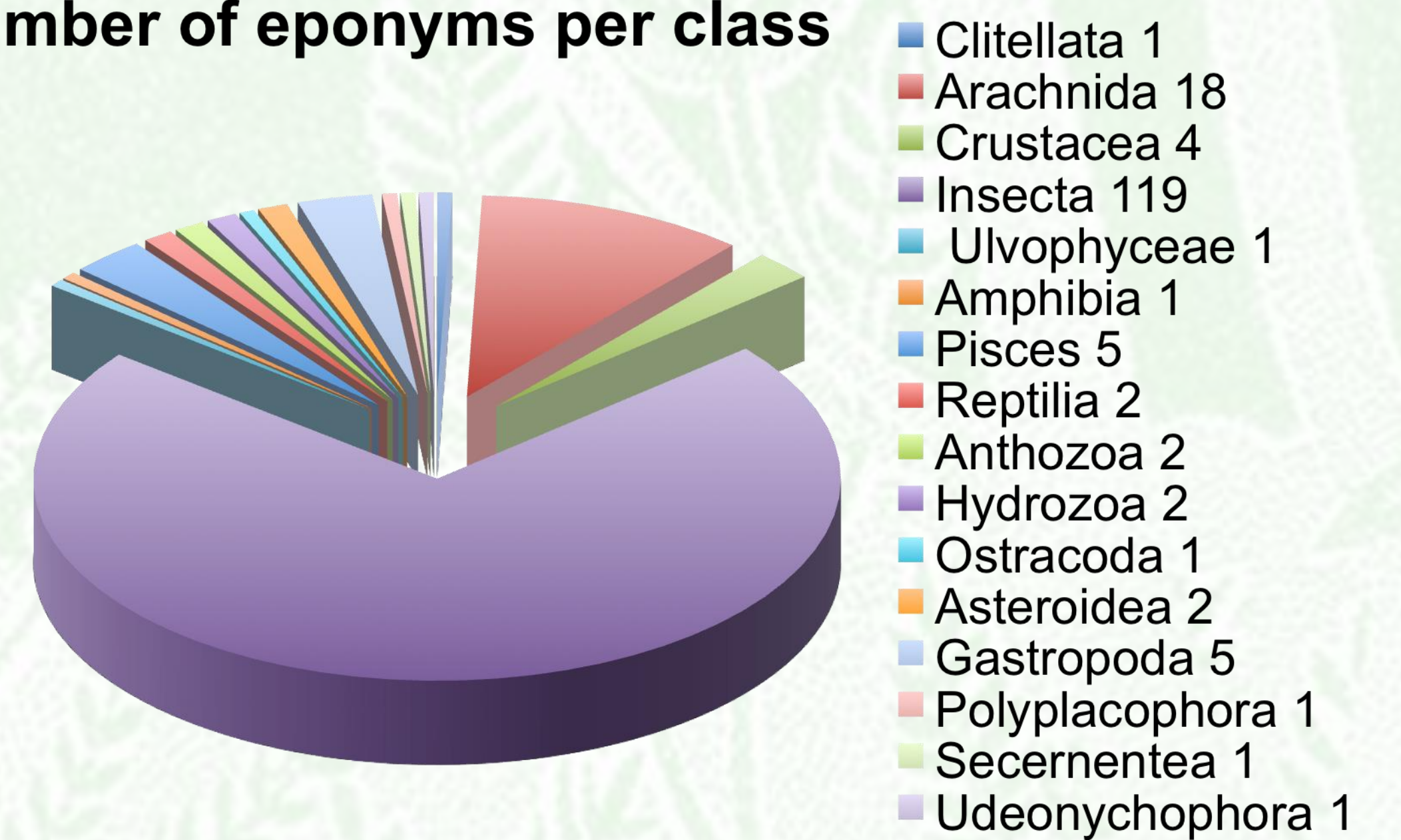
Types are irreplaceable scientific resources providing research opportunities. This work has permitted to recover ±170 types. Types form the objective standards of scientific names. In that sense they are of huge importance in collections. The RBINS safeguards ten thousands of types and is considered a worldwide leader in the management of natural history collections.

Taxonomists

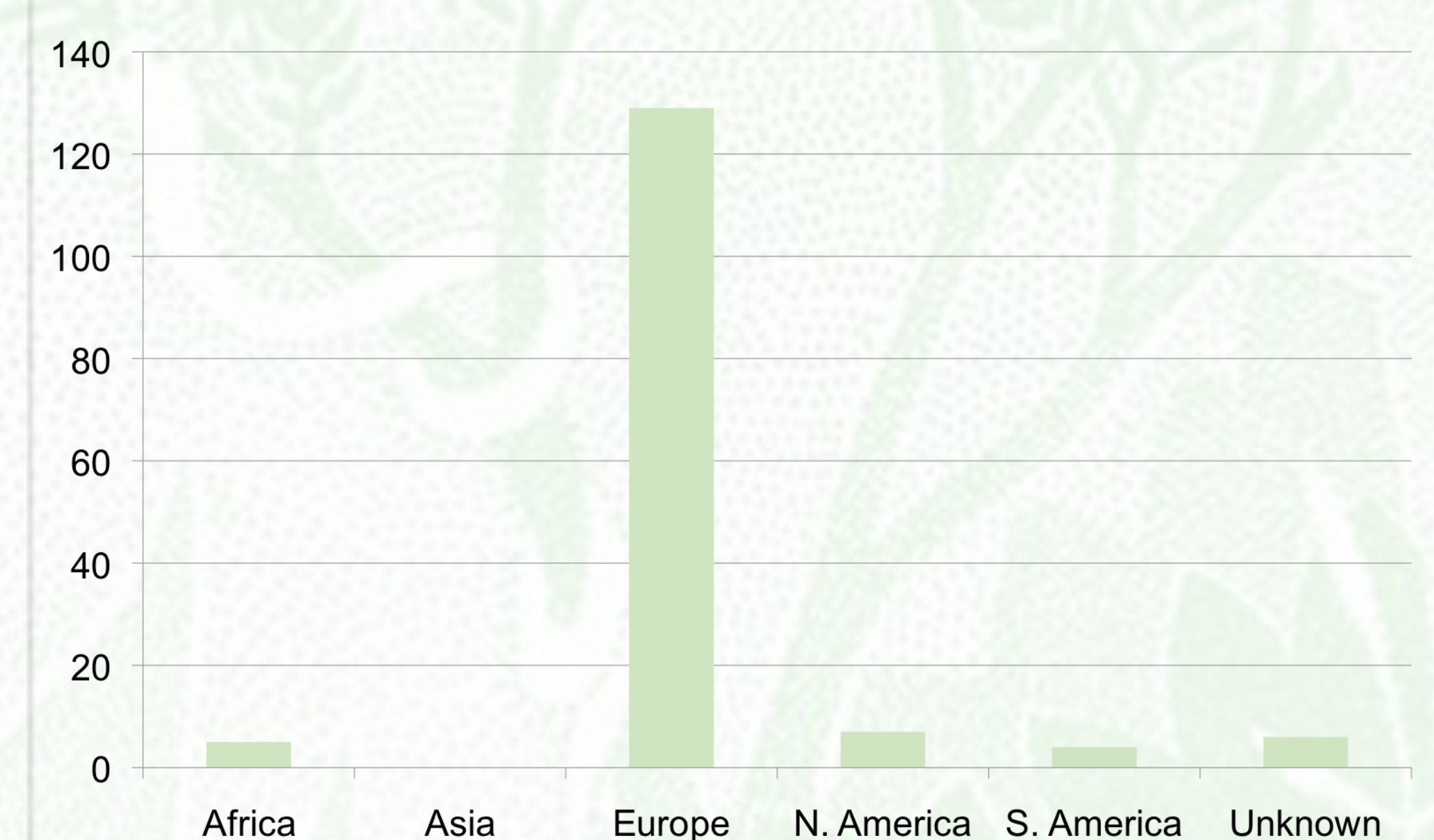
The majority of eponyms was established by Europeans even if the bulk of the material came from Africa and South-East Asia. Did the taxonomic impediment already exist nearly a century ago and did the Royals realize this?



Number of eponyms per class



Distribution of contributions



Conclusions

- The numerous nature explorations of Princess/Queen Astrid and Prince/King Léopold III have resulted in vast zoological collections that are curated predominantly at the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences and the Royal Museum of Central Africa.
- Internet aggregators must be used under the precautionary principle and results must always be checked with original publications.
- Recovery of types in the RBINS collections will be most efficient through systematic screening of in house publications linked to searches through the collections.
- ±170 eponyms have been recorded so far.
- The story continues. In 2014, a new species of wasp is named in honour of King Philippe : *Nervellius philippus* Braet, 2014

¹ Literature and collections: *Mémoires du Musée royal d'Histoire naturelle de Belgique*; *Bulletin du Musée royal d'Histoire naturelle de Belgique*; *Revue de Zoologie et Botanique Africaines*; *Annales de la Société Royale Zoologique de Belgique*; only RBINS collections.

² IPNI: The International Plant Name Index.

Fellers, G. M. (2014). *Animal taxa named for Rollo H. Beck*. *Archives of Natural History*, 41(1): 113-123.

Miličić et al. (2011). *How many Darwins? List of animal taxa named after Charles Darwin*. *Natura Montenegrina, Podgorica*, 10(4): 515-532.