



International Symposium

## ***Ecology of Aphidophaga 11***

Perugia - Italy, 19-24 September 2010

### **MESSAGE**

Dear Colleagues,

We are pleased to announce that the 11<sup>th</sup> International Symposium “Ecology of Aphidophaga” will be held in Perugia, Italy from 19<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> September 2010. The Working Group “Ecology of Aphidophaga” was founded in 1965 by Prof. Ivo Hodek during the first Symposium on the Ecology of Aphidophagous insects held at Liblice in the Czech Republic. It became a Working Group within the International Organization of Biological Control (IOBC) in 1987.

The purpose of Aphidophaga conferences is to provide an international forum for the presentation and discussion of research on the biology, ecology and behaviour of organisms contributing to mortality of aphids (Hemiptera Aphididae). Since the beginning of the last century, aphids have become major pests causing periodic infestations of crops in fields and greenhouses (e.g. apple and peach trees, wheat, melon) and producers may lose up to 30% of their potential yield due to direct feeding damage and vectored diseases. Conventionally, aphids have been controlled mostly by pesticides which, when used regularly and intensively, may cause the evolution of resistance, pollution of the environment, and leave toxic residues on agricultural products, thus harming consumers. Thus, there is a growing interest among farmers and consumers in ways to improve biological control of aphids with natural enemies as an alternative to pesticides, a trend that should be encouraged with more research in the laboratory and the field to improve both efficacy and feasibility.

The unifying premise of Aphidophaga is that organisms utilizing aphids as food sources share common ecological attributes arising from the unique biology and demography of aphid populations. With respect to research topics, the intent of Aphidophaga is to be as inclusive as possible.

Participants are encouraged to present research findings or theoretical models that may range in focus from highly specialized aphid natural enemies, to peripheral biotic mortality factors, to large scale ecosystem processes of which aphids are one component. There is no intrinsic bias toward either applied or basic research, but rather an expectation that topics will be of general interest to participants, stimulate scientific curiosity, and generate ideas for further investigations. Ecology of Aphidophaga meets once every three years and the official language of meetings is English.

The Symposium will be dedicated to Prof. Michael E. N. Majerus who died prematurely on 27 January 2009. Professor of Ecology at Clare College Cambridge (United Kingdom), he was a gifted geneticist and widely renowned for his work on moths and ladybirds and a spirited defender of Darwin and his theory of natural selection. Prof. Majerus will be given a special commemoration including presentation of a Memorial medal.

We hope that the forthcoming symposium will interest you and look forward to welcoming you to Perugia. Please circulate this message to any colleagues potentially interested.

**J.P. Michaud, K. Giles, N.G. Kavallieratos, C. Ricci, W. Weisser**

**Conveners, Ecology of Aphidophaga 11**