

Editorial

Progress in a time of change

Delta, Omicron, vaccination, variant, booster, super-spreader, mask mandates, asymptomatic, quarantine, shelter-in-place, lockdown, social distance, remote work, hybrid, Zoom. All are “keywords” that, over the past two years (whether we like it or not!), have become part of our everyday vernacular and are recognizable around the world. Change and progress could also be used to define the past two years. When considering change, the pandemic has certainly brought about many disruptions and unwanted changes to our work and home lives. In terms of work, most, if not all, of us have faced some combination of cancelled meetings or conferences, closures to our offices or labs, delayed or reduced funding, and limited opportunity to collaborate in-person with colleagues. These changes have resulted in the need for us to acclimate quickly to new working and living conditions. Like many of you, for many weeks after the onset of the pandemic, I was faced with very minimal access to my lab space – this was problematic as I, along with my students, were several weeks into a study involving live chironomids. Given we were working with living organisms, we were fortunately granted special access, albeit only one of us could be in the lab at any given time, and only for limited duration. I’m sure many of you have similar stories.

Despite the necessary changes, we’ve come a long way, and perhaps it’s worthwhile to reflect on some of the progress associated with the last several months. While in-person gatherings have been limited, many of us have quickly learned to better utilize virtual environments that allow us to stay connected and continue to effectively collaborate with and learn from one another. Even though this virtual world may not be as desirable as face-to-face, many of us have benefitted immensely from virtually “meeting” with or collaborating in real-time on the same digital document with colleagues in distant parts of the world –or, even with those right down the hall! And, even though mask requirements and the progress associated with vaccines has allowed us to loosen up some restrictions, we can continue to use and build off of these virtual work and meeting environments, more effectively utilizing and fostering our networks.

Staying on top of current research publications, such as those included in our journal, has been another great way we have been able to stay connected to one another. We celebrate the close of the year with a compilation of excellent publications which highlight change and progress that has occurred in our chironomid community over the past year. As for change, our community unfortunately lost two long-standing colleagues/friends in 2021. We take time to remember and celebrate the lives of Dr. Len Ferrington Jr. (Bouchard et al. 2021) and Dr. Clive Pinder (Cranston 2021). The passing of these experts certainly leaves holes in our chironomid community, however their legacy will live on; we hope you take a moment to read their tributes and reflect on their many contributions. The research articles included here are a great example of progress in terms of new knowledge shared. Specifically, this volume of *CHIRONOMUS* includes work that describes longevity of Icelandic Chironomidae (Nyquist et al. 2021), descriptions of new species within the genera *Pseudorthocladius* (Lods-Crozet and Moubayed-Breil 2021) and *Dicrotendipes* (Lin and Qui 2021), taxonomic research that stresses the placement of *Prosilocerus* within the Prodiamesinae (Baranov 2021), as well as work that documents chironomids known from Brazil (Sonada and Ambiente 2021).

We hope you enjoy learning from these contributions. Here’s to a healthy year ahead filled with positive change and continued progress!

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