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Nils Otto Møller Andersen was born in the village Radsted near Sakskojbing on the island Lolland in southeastern Denmark as the youngest child of four: Poul (1928-2004), Knud (1929-1987) and Bodil (1930-2002). His parents, Hans (1900-1956) and Marie (1907-1969) sold timber, cars, and machines for the agricultural industry. Nils was deeply interested in zoology from an early age, and his passion for semiaquatic bugs (Heteroptera: Gerromorpha) began with detailed observations of the pond skater Limnoporus rufoscutellatus (Latreille) on the family’s garden pond when he was a young boy. After the untimely death of his father, Nils choose not to participate in the family business that occupied his brothers, but instead went to ‘gymnasium’ [high school] in the nearby city of Maribo. Here he met Annemarie Børsen Pedersen, a classmate with whom he shared a happy marriage from 1966. Nils graduated from ‘gymnasium’ in 1961, and immediately served the compulsory 1.5 years military duties in the ‘Sjællandske Artilleri Regiment, Holbæk’. He became a proficient artillery spotter but spent all his spare time reading about entomology (Hemiptera in particular). Immediately after the end of his military service, he initiated studies at the University. From these beginnings and with a curiosity rooted in his own observations, Nils proceeded to become an internationally prominent entomologist, a central figure in the application of innovative phylogenetic approaches and the universally recognized world authority on semi-aquatic bugs. As a result, from the mid-1970s, the Zoological Museum in Copenhagen was the hub of international work on gerromorphans, a crossroad of international heteropterology, and a bright light of systematic entomology for those interested in extensions of phylogenetic analysis. The Andersen home in Holte became an inviting hideaway base of intense international discussion and exciting collaborative work for those who shared interest in semi-aquatic bugs with Nils.

Nils began his formal studies of biology at the University of Copenhagen in 1963, and worked straight through to the ‘Magister scientiarum’ degree in 1970. He pursued his work from the Department of Entomology at the Zoological Museum, which today is a part of the Natural History Museum of Denmark, an institution in which Nils took great pride and delighted in honorably representing all over the world. He remained associated with the Museum for the rest of his life, first as research associate (1970-1975), then as ‘lektor’ [associate professor] (1975-1987) and finally as ‘docent’ [a special merits promotion, somewhat comparable to a readership in British academia] from 1988. Nils served as director of the Zoological Museum from 1982-1986 and brought it through a particularly difficult period. In 1983-1986 he was chairman in the museum committee of the university senate, and was head of the Department of Entomology from 1990-1993 and

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again from 2004. In 1996 he was elected member of the Royal Danish Academy of Science and Letters.

Nils had a long and invaluable affiliation with Entomologica Scandinavica (since 2000: Insect Systematics & Evolution). He became appointed member of the editorial board of 1975, editor in chief from 1983, and editor in chief and managing editor from 2003. During this long period of time, Nils continuously strived to maintain journal as one of the most high profile outlets for systematic entomology in Europe. Even though Nils was an extremely active contributor to this journal, his scientific career began long before the journal was founded in 1970, which is evident from his impressive list of publications shown below. His first publication was a Danish-language note about aquatic and semiaquatic bugs from the island on which he was born (1). A few years later in 1964 his first serious taxonomic study appeared as the description of two species of Tenagogenus (2), which he discovered on his spare-time visits to the museum collections during his military service. Even though the definitive scope of his interests in gerromorphans expanded appropriately to a global scale, Nils remained deeply interested in the Danish fauna and a strong advocate for Danish natural history. His idea of a perfect afternoon certainly included a long stroll through the countryside around his home in Holte or elsewhere in Denmark, with an opportunity to observe and discuss details of natural history. For those fortunate enough to have joined him during such outings, it was apparent that he used them to ever sharpen his understanding of the world around him. Nils often made predictions about what was to be found over the next hill, and if things were different, a companion would be treated to a session of trying to understand why. Nils was deeply concerned about the disappearance of Danish insects (e.g., large-bodied water strider species (85, 108), saproxylic beetles), especially when explanations seemed to be anthropogenic impacts (57).

A thorough comparative study of life-history in two species of water striders, Gerris lacustris (L.) and G. odontogaster (Zetterstedt), constituted the basis for Nils’ exceptional ‘Magister’ dissertation (13). Although wing-polymorphisms in waterstriders had fascinated evolutionary biologists back to the time of Poisson, Nils and Finnish contemporary, Kari Vepsäläinen working in Helsinki, put this sort of work on a modern footing and inspired additional work all around the world. As the central contribution in his thesis, Nils recognized that the wing polymorphisms in these two species came about through quite different physiological mechanisms and that the wing-length variation was inextricably related to other aspects of life-history, including structural and developmental features. He emphasized that these needed to be approached as an adaptive syndrome. The resulting publication remains to this day one of Nils’s most cited publications and an important starting point for all students gerrid life history. He pursued various aspects of this theme during the remainder of his career, leaving behind a wealth of creative and inspiring publications (32, 59, 66, 67, 80, 87, 88, 104).

Although his interests ranged widely across systematics, functional morphology, evolution and ecology, Nils recognized that resources at his beloved Museum were most appropriate for work in systematics. He met this challenge with enthusiasm, leaving a legacy of extremely valuable papers that permit informed access to the Gerromorpha for all students of this group. His first major taxonomic monograph was a revision of the Old World species of Limnogonus and Neogerris with a widely adopted reclassification of the subfamily Gerrinae (15). Later he became very interested in sea skaters (Halobates Eschscholtz) and their marine relatives, and published a flurry of papers dealing with taxonomy, biogeography, ecology and evolution of this fascinating group of insects (18, 41, 42, 48, 49, 51, 55, 68, 69, 70, 78, 90, 91, 92, 95, 98, 103, 106, 110, 111, 116, 124, 132). He also devoted much attention to the semi-terrestrial water striders in the subfamily Eotrechinae (25, 33, 37, 94).

As a taxonomist, Nils was tremendously productive, describing more than 200 species of semiaquatic bugs - which accounts for more than 10% of the world gerromorphan fauna. He published important papers on all eight currently recognized families of Gerromorpha, and even described one of these, the Paraphrynoveliidae, himself (21). Among this wealth of excellent taxonomic studies, treatments of the three principal Holarctic genera, Limnopus Stål (58), Aquarius Schellenberg (44) and Gerris Fabricius (60) stand out as particularly important because species of these genera are the most frequent gerromorphan subjects of studies in ecology and behavior. His detailed work about the fossil history of semiaquatic bugs, addressing re-