



In Memoriam

Gershom Levy (1937–2009)

Dr. Gershom Levy passed away on 21 March, 2009, and his life's work on the arachno-fauna of the Land of Israel came to an untimely end. Gershom was born in Tel Aviv in 1937, but from 1943 on he lived in Jerusalem. He matriculated from The Hebrew University High School in 1955, and in 1964 he received his M.Sc. in biological sciences from The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, specializing in zoology, chemistry, and parasitology. For several years Gershom was an instructor in the Entomology Department of The Hebrew University, and in 1969 he earned his Ph.D. from The Hebrew University.

Gershom's career in arachnology began with his M.Sc. with A. Shulov. Shulov suggested that he undertake a revision of the Solifugae (camel-spiders or sun-spiders) of Israel. This was a very ambitious project. Later Gershom remarked, in a typically honest appraisal, that this was too large a task for a young and inexperienced taxonomist, and much work remained. Gershom's Ph.D. research was on the biology and systematics of the crab-spider family (Thomisidae) of Israel and adjacent areas. One of the most cited of his early papers is on the life history of *Thomisus onustus* and a general classification of life-history patterns.

In 1970, after he began work on the scorpions of Israel, Gershom received a travel

grant to study the scorpion collections at the natural history museums of Paris and London, and in particular to visit Professor M. Vachon, a leading scorpion taxonomist in Paris. During 1971 Gershom was a Research Associate at the Agassiz Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard University with Professor Herbert Levi, the doyen of American arachnology. After returning to Israel, Gershom taught several courses at The Hebrew University, including arachnology, entomology, general biology, and faunistics; and ecology and evolution at Ben-Gurion University.

From 1978 until 1996, when he took early retirement, Gershom was curator of the National Arachnid Collection at The Hebrew University. After retiring officially, however, he continued to curate the collections and received grants for taxonomic work on the arachnofauna of Israel, and continued his research even when no grant money was available. Gershom was determined to pursue his taxonomic work on the arachnofauna of the Middle East, and put this goal ahead of academic advancement. In doing so, he demonstrated a determination and dedication to a cause that is rare in scientists today.

The arachnid collection at the Hebrew University was his “baby”. Gershom added many specimens from Israel and neighboring areas and improved and maintained the collection single-handed. As a consequence of his curatorial activities, the National Arachnid Collection at The Hebrew University has become an invaluable resource for researchers in the region and around the world. He generously identified arachnids for students and researchers, and numerous ecological projects in Israel owe their spider and scorpion identifications to Gershom and to the fine collection he built. The collection also served regional and worldwide revisions of spider families by other taxonomists, e.g., Oonopidae (M. Saaristo, Finland), Salticidae (J. Proszynski, Poland), and Dysderidae (under revision by M. Rezac, Czech Republic).

Gershom’s career was devoted to studying the families of solifugids, scorpions, and spiders of Israel and the neighboring areas, but his taxonomic work had a wider regional importance. His treatise on the scorpions of Israel in the *Fauna Palaestina* series remains the authoritative work for the region. Recently, Gershom received the fragments of a troglobitic scorpion found in sealed caves of the Judean foothills and after much delicate work and careful study he found it necessary to describe it as a member of an entirely new family of scorpions, aptly named Akravidae (akrav = scorpion, in Hebrew). Taxonomic studies of solifugids (five publications), scorpions (six publications), and spiders (38 publications) appeared with regularity over the span of some 45 years. His most recent paper, published posthumously, is the conclusion of many years of work on the gnaphosid spiders and includes a checklist of the 126 known species of the region.

Over the years, Gershom described five new solifugid species, seven new scorpion species (including two new genera and a new family), and 126 new species and five new genera of spiders from the region. He did not particularly enjoy describing new species, and was happiest when he could revise genera and families, such that synonymies were clarified and all the previous material relevant to the group could be neatly organized with good keys to the species in the region. He referred to this process as “cleaning up the field”, and the solving of such taxonomic puzzles provided a stimulating and satisfying intellectual activity. The resulting keys and revisions are invaluable for taxonomists and

ecologists alike. They are excellent in the quality of both text and illustrations. Although Gershom modestly claimed to be “unable to draw animals”, his drawings of complex spider genitalia, eye arrangements, and other anatomical features were executed with the greatest attention to detail and accuracy and are truly beautiful works of art.

Gershom Levy’s taxonomic works on the arachnofauna of this region are a legacy for future generations of researchers. He received international recognition for his work: seven species were named in his honor. His publications appear in many of the leading journals of systematic biology, and in 1998 a special issue of the *Israel Journal of Zoology* was dedicated to him on the occasion of his retirement. Gershom did not attend meetings of professional societies but he maintained an active scientific correspondence with leading arachnologists world-wide. Nevertheless, he was always modest about his work and remained loyal to his aim to describe and to document the regional fauna.

To encourage interest in the local fauna among Israeli students and researchers, Gershom published many papers in the *Israel Journal of Zoology* and three monographs in the *Fauna Palaestina* series (Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities). He edited the volume on terrestrial invertebrates for the *Encyclopedia of the Fauna and Flora of Israel* (in Hebrew) and wrote the sections on myriapods and arachnids. Gershom was also a member of the Israel Academy’s language committee, which provided Hebrew names of arthropods and was responsible for the Hebrew names of the arachnid orders and of many common species of arachnids and insects. Gershom was delighted when he could share his knowledge and experience, and his hope was that someone would continue taxonomic research on arachnids in Israel.

Gershom devoted much time to his family. He was also an avid reader of a wide range of subjects, but especially history, archeology, and art. He was an amateur philatelist, and several arachnologist colleagues supplied him with stamps from various countries. With his family, he traveled to national parks and archeological sites on all five continents. Gershom is survived by his wife Rina, their three children and six grandchildren.

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GERSHOM LEVY: NEW SPECIES, GENERA, AND A FAMILY

Scorpiones

Family AKRAVIDAE Levy 2007

Akrav Levy 2007

Akrav israchanani Levy 2007

Family BUTHIDAE

Compsobuthus arabicus Levy, Amitai and Shulov, 1973

Cosmobuthus carmelitis Levy, Amitai and Shulov, 1973

- Compsobuthus jordanensis* Levy, Amitai and Shulov, 1973
Cosmobuthus longipalpis Levy, Amitai and Shulov, 1973
Buthacus nigroaculeatus Levy, Amitai and Shulov, 1973
Vachoniolus Levy, Amitai and Shulov, 1973
Vachoniolus globimanus Levy, Amitai and Shulov, 1973

Solifugae

Family DAESIIDAE

- Blossia albocaudata* Levy and Shulov, 1964
Blossia omeri (Levy and Shulov, 1964)
Gluiopsona lahavi Levy and Shulov, 1964

Family GALEODIDAE

- Othoes rimmonensis* Panouse, Levy and Shulov, 1967
Gylippus (Gylippus) yerohami Levy and Shulov, 1964

Araneae

Family AGELENIDAE

- Agelescape* Levy, 1996
Agelescape gideonii Levy, 1996
Maimuna carmelica Levy, 1996
Maimuna meronis Levy, 1996
Malthonica epacris (Levy, 1996)
Malthonica mediterranea (Levy, 1996)
Tegenaria angustipalpis Levy, 1996

Family ARANEIDAE

- Cyclosa deserticola* Levy, 1998
Neoscona lotan Levy, 2007
Neoscona sodom Levy, 1998
Singa ammophila Levy, 2007
Zygiella poriensis Levy, 1987

Family CYBAEIDAE

- Cedicus israeliensis* Levy, 1996
Paracedicus baram Levy, 2007
Paracedicus geshur Levy, 2007

Family GNAPHOSIDAE

- Anagraphis pori* Levy, 1999
Berlandina avishur Levy, 2009
Drassyllus adullam Levy, 2009
Drassyllus jubatopalpis Levy, 1998
Haplodrassus atarot Levy, 2004
Haplodrassus lilliputanus Levy, 2004
Haplodrassus mediterraneus Levy, 2004
Heser aradensis (Levy, 1998)

- Leptopilos* Levy, 2009
Leptopilos levantinus Levy, 2009
Leptopilos lakhish Levy, 2009
Megamyрмаekion hula Levy, 2009
Megamyрмаekion magshimim Levy, 2009
Micaria galilaea Levy, 2009
Minosia simeonica Levy, 1995
Nomisia negebensis Levy, 1995
Odontodrassus aravaensis Levy, 1999
Phaeoecedus hebraeus Levy, 1999
Phaeoecedus mikha Levy, 2009
Poecilochroa golan Levy, 1999
Poecilochroa taborensis Levy, 1999
Pterotricha engediensis Levy, 1995
Pterotricha levantina Levy, 1995
Pterotricha parasyriaca Levy, 1995
Setaphis mediterranea Levy, 2009
Talanitoides Levy, 2009
Talanitoides habesor Levy, 2009
Trachyzelotes miniglossus Levy, 2009
Zelotes adderet Levy, 2009
Zelotes baram Levy, 2009
Zelotes bashaneus Levy, 1998
Zelotes bokerensis Levy, 1998
Zelotes eremus Levy, 1998
Zelotes galuni Levy, 1998
Zelotes geshur Levy, 2009
Zelotes golanensis Levy, 2009
Zelotes haifaensis Levy, 2009
Zelotes harmeron Levy, 2009
Zelotes helvoloides Levy, 1998
Zelotes hierosolymitanus Levy, 1998
Zelotes incisupalpis Levy, 1998
Zelotes lehavim Levy, 2009
Zelotes meronensis Levy, 1998
Zelotes naphthalii Levy, 2009
Zelotes paradderet Levy, 2009
Zelotes parascrutatus Levy, 1998
Zelotes shaked Levy, 1998
Zelotes olstitalis Levy, 1998
Zelotes sumchi Levy, 1998
Zelotes xerophilus Levy, 1998
Zelotes zekharya Levy, 2009
Zelotes zin Levy, 1998

Family HAHNIIDAE

- Hahnia carmelita* Levy, 2007

Family OXYOPIDAE

- Oxyopes elifaz* Levy, 2007
- Oxyopes mediterraneus* Levy, 1999
- Oxyopes nanulineatus* Levy, 1999
- Oxyopes sinaiticus* Levy, 1999

Family PHILODROMIDAE

- Ebo eremus* Levy, 1999
- Ebo halophilus* Levy, 1977
- Ebo patellidens* Levy, 1977
- Philodromus denisi* Levy, 1977
- Philodromus hierosolymitanus* Levy, 1977
- Philodromus kalliaensis* Levy, 1977
- Philodromus latrophagus* Levy, 1999
- Philodromus pygmaeus* Levy, 1977
- Philodromus sinaiticus* Levy, 1977
- Thanatus meronensis* Levy, 1977
- Thanatus sepiacolor* Levy, 1999

Family SPARASSIDAE

- Cerbalus aravaensis* Levy, 2007
- Cerbalus negebensis* Levy, 1989
- Cerbalus psammodes* Levy, 1989

Family THERIDIIDAE

- Crustulina hermonensis* Levy and Amitai, 1979
- Dipoena galilaea* Levy and Amitai, 1981
- Enoplognatha deserta* Levy and Amitai, 1981
- Enoplognatha giladensis* (Levy and Amitai, 1982)
- Enoplognatha macrochelalis* Levy and Amitai, 1981
- Enoplognatha mediterranea* Levy and Amitai, 1981
- Enoplognatha parathoracica* Levy and Amitai, 1981
- Episinus fontinalis* Levy, 1985
- Episinus israeliensis* Levy, 1985
- Euryopsis hebraea* Levy and Amitai, 1981
- Simitidion agaricographum* (Levy and Amitai, 1982)
- Steatoda trianguloides* Levy, 1991
- Steatoda xerophila* Levy and Amitai, 1982
- Theridion accoense* Levy, 1985
- Theridion dafnense* Levy and Amitai, 1982
- Theridion gekkonicum* Levy and Amitai, 1982
- Theridion hermonense* Levy, 1991
- Theridion hierichonticum* Levy and Amitai, 1982
- Theridion jordanense* Levy and Amitai, 1982
- Theridion negebense* Levy and Amitai, 1982
- Theridion ochreolum* Levy and Amitai, 1982
- Theridion vallislinarum* Levy and Amitai, 1982
- Theridion vespertinum* Levy, 1985

Theridion zekharya Levy, 2007

Family THOMISIDAE

Monaeses israeliensis Levy, 1973
Ozyptila judaea Levy, 1975
Ozyptila omega Levy, 1975
Ozyptila patellibidens Levy, 1999
Ozyptila sedotmikha Levy, 2007
Tmarus hazevensis Levy, 1973
Tmarus yerohamus Levy, 1973
Xysticus altitudinis Levy, 1976
Xysticus caperatoides Levy, 1976
Xysticus sansan Levy, 2007
Xysticus sinaiticus Levy, 1999

Family ZODARIIDAE

Palaestina eremica Levy, 1992
Pax Levy, 1990
Pax engediensis Levy, 1990
Pax palmonii Levy, 1990
Zodarion geshur Levy, 2007
Zodarion judaeorum Levy, 1992
Zodarion odem Levy, 2007

Family ZORIDAE

Israzorides Levy, 2003
Israzorides judaeus Levy, 2003

Family ZOROPSIDAE

Zoropsis thaleri Levy, 2007

IN HONOR OF DR. GERSHOM LEVY

Publications

- B. Condé and M. Nguyen Duy: Pénicillates d'Israel rassemblés par G. Levy. *Bulletin du Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle (2e sér)* 42 (6): 1251–1258, 1970 (1971) (Diplopoda).
 Y. Lubin (Guest co-editor): Spiders of Israel: Systematics, Ecology, and Behavior. *Festschrift* issue. *Israel Journal of Zoology* 44 (2): 93–251, 1998.

Named species

- Solifuga: *Galeodes levyi* Harvey, 2002
 Scorpion: *Androctonus amoreuxi levyi* Fet, 1997
 Spider: *Phlegra levyi* Proszynski, 1998
 Spider: *Enoplognatha gershomi* Bosmans and Van Keer, 1999
 Spider: *Aelurillus gershomi* Proszynski, 2000
 Spider: *Agelescape levyi* Guseinov, Marusik and Koponen, 2005
 Spider: *Gamasomorpha gershomi* Saaristo, 2006 (published 2007)

PUBLICATIONS OF DR. GERSHOM LEVY

- 1962 Observations on mating in a Solifugid *Galeodes sulfuripes* Roewer. *Bulletin of the Research Council of Israel* 11 B (3): 156–159 (with P. Amitai and A. Shulov).
- 1963 Solifugae, their biology and ecology. *Teva Va'aretz* 5 (4): 158–163. [in Hebrew]
- 1963 A key to the identification of the Solifugae of Israel. *Teva Va'aretz* 5: 1–23. [in Hebrew]
- 1964 The Solifugae of Israel. *Israel Journal of Zoology* 13 (3): 102–120 (with A. Shulov).
- 1965 Laboratory Guide for General Entomology. *The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Department of Entomology*. 80 pp. 95 figs. (with A. Finger). [in Hebrew]
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- 1969 The biology and colour change in *Thomisus onustus* and the systematics of the Thomisidae (Araneae) of Israel. Ph.D. Thesis, The Hebrew University, Jerusalem. 200 pp. [in Hebrew]
- 1970 The life cycle of *Thomisus onustus* (Thomisidae, Araneae) and outlines for the classification of the life histories of spiders. *Journal of Zoology, London* 160 (4): 523–536.
- 1970 *Leiurus quinquestriatus hebraeus* (Birula, 1908) (Scorpiones: Buthidae) and its systematic position. *Israel Journal of Zoology* 19 (4): 231–242 (with P. Amitai and A. Shulov).
- 1973 New Scorpions from Israel, Jordan and Arabia. *Zoological Journal of the Linnean Society, London* 52 (2): 113–140 (with P. Amitai and A. Shulov).
- 1973 Crab-spiders of six genera from Israel (Araneae: Thomisidae). *Israel Journal of Zoology* 22 (2–4): 107–141.
- 1975 The spider genera *Synaema* and *Oxyptila* in Israel (Araneae: Thomisidae). *Israel Journal of Zoology* 24 (3–4): 155–175.
- 1976 The spider genus *Xysticus* (Araneae: Thomisidae) in Israel. *Israel Journal of Zoology* 25 (1): 1–37.
- 1977 The philodromid spiders of Israel (Araneae: Philodromidae). *Israel Journal of Zoology* 26 (3–4): 193–229.
- 1978 Systematics and biology of Buthinae (Arachnida: Scorpiones). (with A. Shulov). In: S. Bettini, ed., *Handbook of Experimental Pharmacology; Arthropod Venoms* 48: 309–312. Springer Verlag, Berlin and New York.
- 1979 The spider genus *Crustulina* (Araneae: Theridiidae) in Israel. *Israel Journal of Zoology* 28 (2–3): 114–130 (with P. Amitai).
- 1980 **Scorpiones**. Monograph in: *Fauna Palaestina (Arachnida I)*. VI+134 pp. (with P. Amitai). Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, Jerusalem.
- 1981 Spiders of the genera *Euryopsis* and *Dipoena* (Araneae: Theridiidae) from Israel. *Bulletin of the British Arachnological Society* 5 (4): 177–188 (with P. Amitai).
- 1981 The spider genus *Enoplognatha* (Araneae: Theridiidae) in Israel. *Zoological Journal of the Linnean Society, London* 72: 43–67 (with P. Amitai).
- 1982 The comb-footed spider genera *Theridion*, *Achaearanea* and *Anelosimus* of Israel (Araneae: Theridiidae). *Journal of Zoology, London* 196: 81–13 (with P. Amitai).
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- 1984 The spider genera *Singa* and *Hypsosinga* (Araneae: Araneidae) in Israel. *Zoologica*

- Scripta*, Oslo and Stockholm 13 (2):121–133.
- 1985 *Terrestrial Invertebrates*. In: *Encyclopedia of Plants and Animals of the Land of Israel* 2, 175 pp. 225 color Illustrations, (Editor of Book and author of Arachnid and Myriapod chapters). Society for Protection of Nature, Israel and Ministry of Defence Publishing House. [in Hebrew]
- 1985 *Araneae: Thomisidae*. Monograph in: *Fauna Palaestina (Arachnida II)*. VI+114 pp. Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, Jerusalem.
- 1985 Spiders of the genera *Episinus*, *Argyrodes* and *Coscinida* from Israel, with additional notes on *Theridion* (Araneae: Theridiidae). *Journal of Zoology, London* 207: 87–123.
- 1986 Spiders of the genera *Siwa*, *Larinia*, *Lipocrea* and *Drexelia* (Araneae: Araneidae) from Israel. *Bulletin of the British Arachnological Society* 7 (1): 1–10.
- 1987 Spiders of the genera *Araniella*, *Zygiella*, *Zilla* and *Mangora* (Araneae: Araneidae) from Israel, with notes on *Metellina* species from Lebanon. *Zoologica Scripta*, Oslo and Stockholm 16 (3): 243–257.
- 1989 The family of huntsman spiders in Israel with annotations on species of the Middle East (Araneae: Sparassidae). *Journal of Zoology, London* 217:127–176.
- 1990 On the cribellate spider *Zoropsis lutea* in Israel (Araneae: Zoropsidae). *Bulletin of the British Arachnological Society* 8 (5): 139–143.
- 1990 Spiders of the genus *Lachesana* and a new storenoid genus from Israel (Araneae: Zodariidae). *Zoological Journal of the Linnean Society*, London 98: 327–362.
- 1991 On some new and uncommon spiders from Israel (Araneae). *Bulletin of the British Arachnological Society* 8 (7): 227–232.
- 1992 The spider genera *Palestina*, *Trygetus*, *Zodarion*, and *Ranops* (Araneae, Zodariidae) in Israel with annotations on species of the Middle East. *Israel Journal of Zoology* 38 (2): 67–110.
- 1993 On the unknown male of *Nonianus pictus* and the female of *Cerbalus negebensis* (Araneae: Sparassidae) from Israel. *Israel Journal of Zoology* 39 (3): 231–234.
- 1994 A review of the ground spider genus *Synaphosus* (Araneae: Gnaphosidae). *American Museum Novitates*, No. 3095, 27 pp. (with V.I. Ovtsharenko and N.I. Platnick).
- 1995 Revision of the spider subfamily Gnaphosinae in Israel (Araneae: Gnaphosidae). *Journal of Natural History*, London 29: 919–981.
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- 1998 Twelve genera of orb-weaver spiders (Araneae: Araneidae) from Israel. *Israel Journal of Zoology* 43 (4): 311–365 (1997).
- 1998 *Araneae: Theridiidae*. Monograph in: *Fauna Palaestina (Arachnida III)*. 226 pp. Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, Jerusalem.
- 1998 The ground-spider genera *Setaphis*, *Trachyzelotes*, *Zelotes*, and *Drassyllus* (Araneae: Gnaphosidae) in Israel. *Israel Journal of Zoology* 44 (2): 93–158.
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- 2001 First record for the genus *Mesobuthus* Vachon, 1950 in Israel: *Mesobuthus nigrocinctus* (Ehrenberg, 1828), n. comb. (Scorpiones: Buthidae) from Mt. Hermon. *Israel Journal of Zoology* 46 (4): 287–295, 2000. (with V. Fet, B.E. Hendrixson, and W.D. Sissom).
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- 2004 Spiders of the genera *Drassodes* and *Haplodrassus* (Araneae, Gnaphosidae) from Israel. *Israel Journal of Zoology* 50 (1): 1–37.
- 2007 The first troglobite scorpion from Israel and a new chactoid family (Arachnida: Scorpiones). *Zoology in the Middle East* 40: 91–96.
- 2007 *Calommata* (Atypidae) and new spider species (Araneae) from Israel. *Zootaxa* 1551: 1–30.
- 2009 New ground-spider genera and species with annexed checklist of the Gnaphosidae (Araneae) of Israel. *Zootaxa* 2066:1–49.