

Editorial

Is it climate change or spike?

Of the three times I have been to London, the first two were at bad weather. The city was drizzly, grey and cloudy and never appealed to me. The third time was a short stay, on a return from Lisbon, Portugal. The ride from Gatwick Airport to London, under the morning sunshine, was rewarding with side walkways splattered with trees and shrubs. This was in September, and I knew my visit next day to the city hub would be pleasant. My context is when this July, London had a temperature of 40°C, it was dubbed ‘heat wave’! Roads cracked and river Thames warmed. There was chaos! But for us ‘Tropicalers,’ 40°C is commonplace. When I was in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, the temperature in June used to be 43-48°C and the refrigerated *Dashaeri* mangoes kept us cool. And, at this temperature range, eggs of fruit flies fail to hatch on the mango pulp and *Dashaeri* escaped infestation. So much for this natural thermal disinfection. But when rain comes in July, the temperature dips, the late maturing mango fruits like *Chausa* get infested.



We in India are lucky that we are quite temperature resilient, and for those of us in Bangalore, on the Deccan Plateau, it is always tolerably pleasant. Overall great to be in India!

If heat is one side of the coin, the other has been floods! From most of India, to S E Asia including South Korea and beyond to New Zealand and not to leave out the US of A, floods have been taking a toll, sparing not this time the urban landscapes and business hubs.

From an insect point of view, climate models go haywire in predicting insect infestations in such unpredictable weather spurts. Surely no insects can stand the fury of gale, hale and storm. Climate-spike models on short temporal X-axis should be therefore the new order.

Insect Environment mourns the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Her role as the Patron of the Royal Entomological Society, for the last 70 years is greatly cherished.



Freebies are so much in news; it is however beyond the scope of this humble journal to discuss on this. Our subscription is a ‘freebie’ as we are a not-for-profit journal! Contextually, I would like to point out that in US, the Inflation Reduction Act, has climate provisions like subsidies for clean power, electric vehicle and for farming practices like no tillage, soil cover crops etc, according to Erik Stostad (*Science*, 16th August, 2022). Something to think on?



This quarter also saw the celebration of the 200th birth anniversary of Gregor Mendel, born 22, July 1822. This Augustinian friars' *principles of inheritance* stood solid for 200 years and laid the foundation of genetics and molecular biology. The sheer dependence on inner Godly Wisdom, to interpret and conceptualize the gene factor manifested in filial pea plants over generations is great. This, without any modern molecular tools, should make every biologist gaze in awe (if they could get to see) at his statue in the Abbey of St. Thomas in Czech Republic.

Insect Environment has been in the ambit of the Internet of Things (IOT) ecosystem from notes/blogs, uploads to referees' connect, to final uploads to various literature search engines and auto-mails. IE is well inter-connected globally. This has enabled us to be the fast, topically relevant information disseminator of insect happenings!. We have already sent an alert blog for *Thrips parvispinus* across south India. Dr. Poorani has blogged in IE the first recovery of the parasitoid *Anagyrus lopezi* post release on cassava mealy bug. There is also a short note in this issue. IE is increasingly becoming relevant, in a time when journals are disappearing! The once acclaimed journals on soil biology, social insects, current biotica, etc are all fossilized. Here I would like to appreciate the efforts put by Dr. V. V Ramamurthy, one of our advisors, in bringing the *Indian Journal of Entomology* on schedule.

The Association for Advancement of Pest Management in Horticultural Ecosystem organized the First Dr. V. G. Prasad Memorial Lecture at IIHR, Bangalore on 29th July 2022. The very memory of Dr. V. G. Prasad is a stimulant to research workers in horticultural entomology. I understand this is going to be an annual feature. A corpus fund for this has been generously donated by Dr Prasad's daughter Mrs. Malvika Khare and family.



IE is a pro-student journal. Short biodiversity accounts for example or small thematic review, who else but IE, with no pretension to 'standards' will publish? We believe in encouraging all dabbling with and watching insects to write, publish and disseminate. That is the only way natural history of insects will grow.

We have literally assimilated two well-known photographers, Drs D. N. Nagaraj and Subramanian Sevgan into the *IE* family. In this issue many of their digital insect captures will enrich the aesthetic dimension of insect diversity. Pictures in lens of IE is again a unique feature. Actually, pictures speak more than words. We thank Mr. Ramesh IFS who permitted us to use a picture he shared in the social media.



The ICAR-National Bureau of Agricultural Insect Resources - Bangalore, a renowned national and globally acclaimed institute, gets a new Director, Dr S N Sushil. IE welcomes him and wishes him an extremely successful stint in his new role.

We sincerely thank all our Editorial Advisors and Team, who have been with us thus far. As per our last executive decisions a little makeover is being done to bring in newness, freshness as well as diversity in the knowledge pool! Dr S Deepak joins as Associate Editor, and he is a super enthusiastic entomologist. We welcome him. Dr. M A Rashmi, continues to anchor web-author –journal interface with aplomb.

Your notes and news on insects are disseminated fastest through IE blogs. Send in your blogs (100 words+ 1 pictures) for fast publication within a week. Our auto-mailing carries it to thousands of viewers.

We wish all of you a pleasant “insecty” reading ahead, browsing through this issue- 25 (3), September, 2022.

Abraham Verghese

Editor-in-Chief