



3rd Palaeontological Virtual Congress

Book of Abstracts

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Book of Abstracts

Palaeontology in the virtual era

From an original idea of Vicente D. Crespo

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THE STORY OF NEMATODES FROM BALTIC AMBER – CASES FROM MAIG COLLECTION

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fossil nematodes, inclusions, taphonomy, Baltic amber



Extinct representatives of the phylum Nematoda and traces of their presence are known since the Devonian (410.8 Mya). Most of these fossils are somehow associated with plant or animal hosts (e.g., nematode eggs in coprolites and phoretic larval stages). Extant nematodes are known from an extremely wide spectrum of habitats, from free-living to strictly parasitic. It must be considered that the fossil record of the group is scarce, lacking paleoecological evidence of some habits observed in extant representatives. Nematoda fossil record comprises 49 genera with 91 species preserved as fossils and subfossils. Among them, 84 species are described as inclusions in fossil resins; most of these were Dauer larvae associated with arthropods. Research material for this study comes from Baltic amber pieces from the Collection of the Museum of Amber Inclusions University of Gdańsk (MAIG). Nematodes were identified in 9 pieces of amber, with at least 103 specimens preserved. The findings include: Dauer larvae juveniles, possible adults, representatives of free-living groups and not-determined nematodes entrapped by predatory fungi. We propose an interpretation of habitats of various nematode trophic groups entrapped in Baltic amber. Such data are crucial for paleontological studies of the group and gives a better understanding of the paleoecology of “amber forests” itself, of the conditions conducting the preservation of the inclusions, and the taphonomy of fossil resins themselves.