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The 9th International Conference on Fossil Insects, Arthropods and Amber held in Xi'an, China

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At the 8th International Conference on Fossil Insects, Arthropods and Amber (Fossil×3) held in 2019 in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, Professor Diying Huang, from the Nanjing Institute of Geology and Palaeontology, Chinese Academy of Sciences (NIGPAS), won the bid to host the 9th Fossil×3 conference in Xi'an, China. Due to the pandemic, the conference was postponed twice and was finally successfully held in the ancient city of Xi'an from April 18–25, 2024.

The conference was hosted by the Nanjing Institute of Geology and Palaeontology, Chinese Academy of Sciences, and the venue was located at the Qujiang Huibinyuan Hotel in Xi'an. Over 170 experts, scholars, and graduate students attended the conference. The participants came from more than 20 countries across Asia, Europe, North America, South America, Africa, and Australia, including China, Spain, Poland, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, the United States, Germany, Finland, Dominica, Lebanon, New Zealand, Kazakhstan, Argentina, Morocco, South Africa, Japan, South Korea, Norway, Chile, and Croatia (Figs 1, 2).

Pre- and mid-conference field trips feature systematic investigation of the Mesozoic strata in northern Shaanxi,

including the Middle Triassic Ermaying Formation, the Middle-Late Triassic Yanchang Formation, the Early-Middle Jurassic Yan'an Formation, the Middle-Late Jurassic Zhiluo Formation, and the Lower Cretaceous Yijun and Luohe formations. Fossil collection was carried out in the Yan'an Formation at Huangjiagou Village, Yuyang District, Yulin City, and Yan'an City. Additionally, participants visited and studied the topography and landforms of the Loess Plateau, as well as the ancient cultural sites in northern Shaanxi (Figs 3, 4, 7).

The conference focused on several research areas, including the diversity and evolution of insect fossils, phylogenetics, integrated studies on amber, Cambrian arthropods, and the taphonomy and methodologies related to arthropods. It showcased a series of new advances in the integrated study of fossil insects, arthropods, and amber in recent years, promoting academic exchanges among experts, scholars, and graduate students in related fields worldwide.

Professor Jacek Szwedo, the President of the International Palaeontological Society (IPS), presented awards to Professors Dany Azar, Chengyang Cai, Jun Wang, Alex Rasnitsyn, and Michael S. Engel.



FIGURE 1. Group photo of the 9th International Conference on Fossil Insects, Arthropods and Amber.



FIGURE 2. Conference highlights. **A**, Group photo of the Organizing Committee. **B**, Midnight preparation meeting. **C**, Registration desk. **D**, **E**, Airport pick-up. **F**, Check-in. **G**, **H**, Late-night research and discussions in the hotel lobby. **I**, Icebreaker. **J**, Conference sign board.

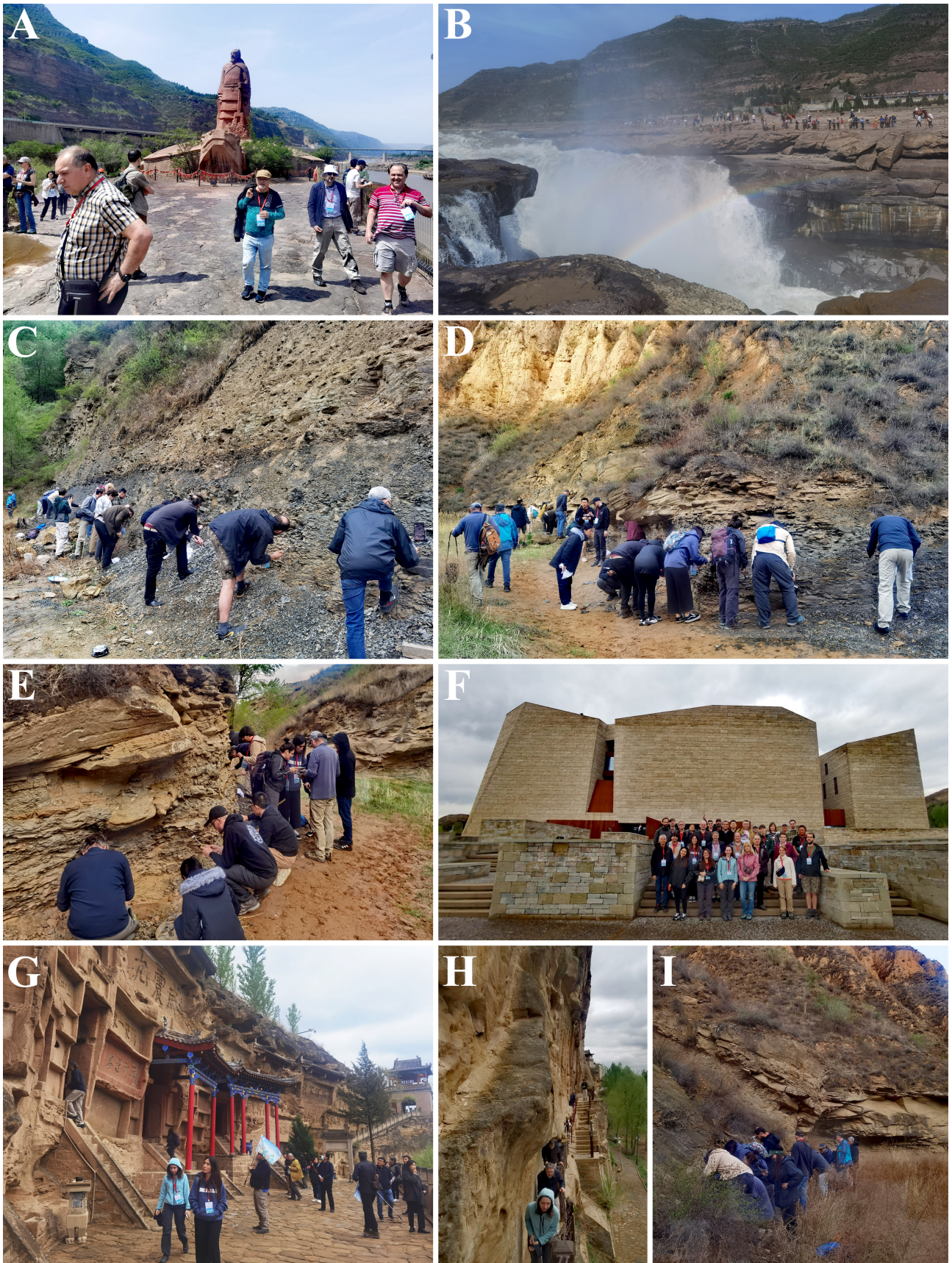


FIGURE 3. Pre-conference field trip. **A**, Mengmen Mountain. **B**, Hukou Waterfall National Geological Park of the Yellow River. **C**, Collecting fossils of the Yan'an Formation in Yan'an City. **D**, **E**, **I**, Collecting fossils of the Yan'an Formation at Huangjiagou Village in Yulin City. **F**, Visiting the Shimao Museum. **G**, **H**, Visiting the stone carvings of the Zhiluo Formation in Hongshixia, Yulin.



FIGURE 4. Visiting Longzhou Danxia Geopark in Jingbian County, Yulin City, to investigate aeolian deposits of the Lower Cretaceous Luohe Formation.



FIGURE 5. Opening ceremony. **A**, Venue of the opening ceremony. **B**, Participants. **C**, Address by Jun Wang, Director of NIGPAS. **D**, Address by Jacek Szwedo, President of the IPC. **E**, Meeting chaired by Chenyang Cai, General Secretary of the Organizing Committee. **F**, Address by Zhiqiang Zhang, Fellow of the Royal Society of New Zealand. **G**, Award presentation by Jacek Szwedo. **H**, Journal recognition awards presented by Diying Huang, Editor-in-Chief of *Palaeoentomology* and Chair of the Organizing Committee.



FIGURE 6. Reflections and plenary talks. **A**, Alex Rasnitsyn from the Palaeontological Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences delivers an acceptance speech. **B**, Michael S. Engel from the American Museum of Natural History delivers an acceptance speech. **C**, Andrew Ross from the National Museum of Scotland chairs the session. **D**, Dany Azar, from NIGPAS, introduce the journal *Palaeoentomology*. **E**, Xingliang Zhang, from the Northwest University, delivers a plenary talk. **F**, Jacek Szwed, President of the IPC and Professor of the University of Gdańsk, Poland, delivers a plenary talk.



FIGURE 7. Mid-conference field trip. **A**, Visit to the Yaozhou Kiln Museum. **B**, Visit to Tang and Song dynasties kiln sites. **C**, Visit to the contact surface between the Middle-Late Jurassic Zhiluo Formation and the Lower Cretaceous Yijun Formation at the Yuhuangong Park. **D**, **E**, Arthropod catching. **F**, Yijun dryland terraces. **G**, **H**, Night view of Xi'an. **I**, **J**, Conference dinner.



FIGURE 8. Conference venue and closing ceremony. **A, C, E,** Presentations. **B, D,** Q&A sessions. **F,** Poster section. **G,** Jacek Szwedo and Diyang Huang present awards to volunteers. **H,** Election of new committee members. **I,** Agnieszka Soszyńska and Jacek Szwedo present the Excellent Student Oral Presentation Award. **J,** Group photo of current and former IPS presidents.



FIGURE 9. Joyous gathering, the Gala Dinner.

Professors Diying Huang and Dany Azar, editors-in-chief of the journal *Palaeoentomology*, awarded the Best Contribution Award to Professor André Nel and the Best Citation Award to Dr Andrew Ross. Professor Diying Huang also presented journal recognition awards to Dany Azar, Jacek Szwedo, Chenyang Cai, Neal Evenhuis, and Zhiqiang Zhang. Professor Xingliang Zhang from Northwest University, China, and Professor Jacek Szwedo from the University of Gdańsk, Poland, delivered invited plenary talks at the conference (Figs 5, 6). Over 100 attendees delivered keynote and regular oral presentations, while 30 participants presented posters. Ms. Shumin Li from Sun Yat-sen University won the Best Student Oral Presentation Award, and Ms. Xinhui Chen, a joint training student from Hebei Normal University and NIGPAS, won the Best Student Poster Award. Eleven graduate students received Excellent Student Oral Presentation Awards, and four graduate students received Excellent Student Poster Awards, presented by Jacek Szwedo, the IPS President, and Agnieszka Soszyńska, Chair of the Scientific Committee of the IPS (Figs 8, 9).

The International Palaeoentomological Society held elections for its new executive and scientific committee

members. Professor Diying Huang was elected President, Professor Agnieszka Soszyńska was elected Vice President, and Dr Mónica M. Solórzano Kraemer was elected General Secretary. In a competitive vote, El Jadida, Morocco, won the bid to host the 10th International Conference on Fossil Insects, Arthropods and Amber in 2027, surpassing Rennes, France.

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