

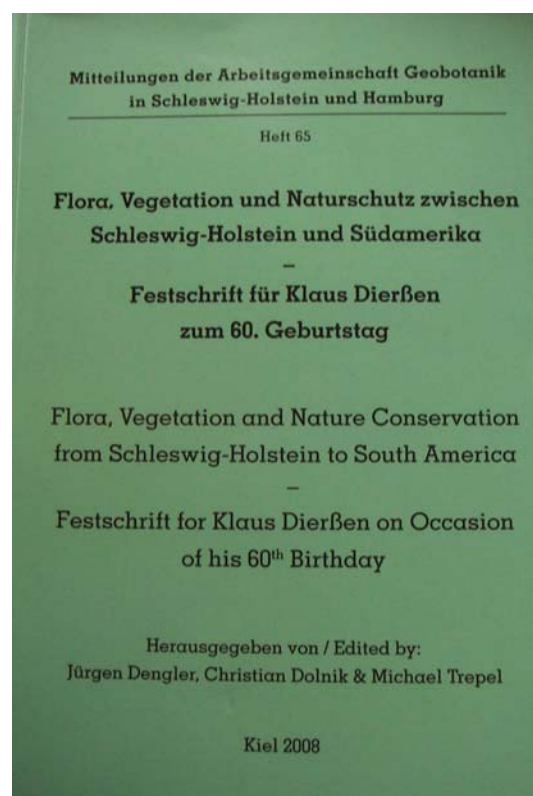
Flora, Vegetation and Nature Conservation from Schleswig-Holstein to South America – Festschrift for Klaus Dierssen on Occasion of his 60th Birthday

Jürgen Dengler, Christian Dolnik & Michael Trepel (editors) (2008)

Mitteilungen der Arbeitsgemeinschaft Geobotanik in Schleswig-Holstein und Hamburg, Volume 65

526 pages
Paperback

ISSN: 0344 – 8002



In 1989, an embryonic idea bequeathed to me along with the office of Secretary to the British Ecological Society Mires Research Group came to fruition, when the University of Dundee hosted the international symposium *Peatland Ecosystems and Man: An Impact Assessment*. I had previously met Harri Vasander, Jukka Laine and colleagues from Helsinki at the 1984 IPS Congress in Dublin, but this was my first full exposure to the ‘international scene’ of mire science. We were honoured to entertain an eloquent Dutchman called Joosten, Mati Ilomets and Edgar Karofeld from Estonia, a Russian ‘science and security’ entourage who paid the registration fee with fistfuls of sterling in large denomination notes, and many others who have since become consistent colleagues. But the most famous participant as far as I was concerned was a youthful Professor from the university at Kiel in Germany. We already had in our laboratory some of his phytosociological data, which came packaged in what looked like a heavy-duty shoebox, and during the meeting Richard Lindsay took the author aside to discuss possibilities for publishing the contents of the shoebox in English.

This was Professor Klaus Dierssen, who celebrated his 60th birthday on 01 June this year (2008). To honour the occasion, 52 of his students, companions and colleagues have collaborated to produce a substantial bilingual “Festschrift” volume, which comes also in the 40th anniversary year of the

first of Dierssen’s 206+ scientific publications and the 31st year since completion of the first of the 25 PhD theses for which he has acted as principal supervisor.

The introductory section explains the conception of the volume, gives biographical and bibliographical information about Klaus Dierssen, and includes a collection of photographs from field excursions across the years. Having started out as a student of Tüxen, Dierssen’s discipline is geobotany; but as a geobotanist focusing primarily on mires, his interests inevitably range much more widely across floristic botany, bryology, vegetation science, landscape ecology, nature conservation and language as well as into other habitats. This diversity of interests is linked fondly to the diversity of physical hats worn by Dierssen under different circumstances, in the set of photographs on page 30.

There follow 29 new peer-reviewed papers, all arising in some way from Dierssen’s four decades as a scientist and teacher. Reflecting the variety of his interests and the later directions of those he has influenced, they are grouped into sections on the geobotany of Schleswig-Holstein (two papers), bryophytes (four papers), mires (five papers), phytosociology (four papers), biodiversity (five papers) and nature conservation (nine papers). As it will be impossible to mention all of them in a concise review, titles from the first five groups are listed in Table 1, and from the last two in Table 2.

Table 1. Details of individual papers included in the first five topic groups. For authors who are former Dierssen research students, the year of thesis completion is shown in parentheses. Shaded boxes indicate the main language - German (De) or English (En) – of each item.

Topic group	Language		Authors	Title
	De	En		
GENERAL			Michael Trepel (1999) Christian Dolnik (2003) Jürgen Dengler (2003)	Flora, vegetation, and nature conservation from Schleswig-Holstein to South America – an introduction to the festschrift for Klaus Dierßen on occasion of his 60 th birthday.
			Joachim Schrautzer (1987) Katrin Fabricius Kathrin Kiehl (1997) Angelika Schwabe-Kratochwil Jürgen Dengler (2003)	Facets of the scientific life of Klaus Dierßen. Bibliography of Klaus Dierßen.
			Oliver Nelle Walter Dörfler	A summary of the late- and post-glacial vegetation history of Schleswig-Holstein
			Michael Breuer	Distribution of vascular plants in Schleswig-Holstein: analysis of floristic data
BRYOPHYTES			Christian Berg Christof Martin	Comparison of the bryophyte floras of Schleswig-Holstein, Hamburg, and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern.
			Monika Koperski	On the distribution of basiphilous bryophytes on allochthonous substrata in the Harz National Park.
			Jörg Ewald	Comparing indicator values of bryophyte and vascular understorey plants in mountain forests.
			Harald Kürschner	Life syndromes of a xerophytic bryophyte community from the Canary Islands – the <i>Fissidento-Riccieta armatissima</i> ass. Nov.
MIRES			Carsten Hobohm	Are there endemic vascular plants in European mires?
			Isabelle Freese Silke Lütt (1992)	Development of vegetation in the Nienwohlder Moor after restoration management.
			Anne Rath Rainer Buchwald	Contribution of the soil seed bank to the restoration of species-rich grasslands on raised bog sites.
			Conradin A. Burga Markus Schartner	Secondary build-up of peat on former peat-cutting sites on moorland at Robenhausen (Lake of Pfäffikon/ZH, Switzerland).
			Barbara Ruthsatz	Hard-cushion mires of the high Andes in northwest Argentina as indicators of climate gradients.
PHYTOSOCIOLOGY			Hartmut Dierschke	<i>Calla palustris</i> quagmires in the lowlands of northern Germany.
			Jürgen Dengler (2003) Steffen Boch	Forest-edge communities (<i>Trifolio-Geranieta sanguinei</i>) on the island of Saaremaa (Estonia): Phytosociology and biodiversity patterns.
			Erwin Bergmeier Haritakis Papaioannou	Rizina marsh – a brief profile of a unique subalpine wetland in NW Greece.
			Werner Heinrich Oswald Pietsch	<i>Isoetes kirkii</i> A. Braun: an endemic species of oligotrophic water bodies in New Zealand – vegetation and site conditions.

Ten of the authors are Dierssen's former research students, collaborating mostly with others but in two cases with each other – Leonid Rasran joining forces with Kati Vogt to report on the diversity of plant propagules in strand lines at the Voss River in Norway (pages 363–374) and with Joachim Schrautzer and Kai Jensen to report on a long-term study of the population dynamics of the German

Red List species *Dactylorhiza incarnata* at Lake Barsbek (pages 461–478). Nestling amongst the accounts of specific scientific investigations are a contribution from Michael Succow and Lebrecht Jeschke pointing out the failure of management-focused nature conservation, however expensive, to conserve the natural habitats of the ecoregion (pages 393–404) and an evaluation of mire plant

endemism across Europe by Carsten Hobohm (pages 143–150). Two contributions, from Michael Trepel (pages 405–413) and Felix Müller with colleagues (pages 443–460), deal with the new approaches to nature conservation dictated by supranational legislation. There is also a thought-provoking analysis by Otto Fränze of the holistic world view of Alexander von Humboldt as the basis for landscape perception in science, art and nature conservation in 19th century America (pages 415–425), and from Peter Jacobsen an excursion into the parallel universe of Duckberg for a tongue-in-cheek evaluation of the effectiveness of nature protection measures with a serious message (pages 427–442).

All in all, this is not only an informative collection of material touching on a wide range of mire-related topics, but also a unique window on the living legacy from Dierssen's first four decades – in terms of both scientific studies that he has instigated and the development of new ideas and directions by his colleagues and former students. The editors express a hope that it will please him and contribute to his quest to improve understanding and conservation of flora and vegetation. I think it will. The editors also wish for all readers 'an inspiring and fascinating read'. I have been fascinated and, in my office, this volume will be consulted and read frequently in the future.

Table 2. Details of individual papers in the last two topic groups. For authors who are former Dierssen research students, the year of completion is shown in parentheses. Shaded boxes indicate the main language - German (De) or English (En) – of each item.

Topic group	Language		Authors	Title
	De	En		
BIODIVERSITY			Erik Christiansen (2007)	The influence of the investigator on recorded species richness.
			Aiko Huckauf	Biodiversity conservation and the extinction of experience.
			Anna-Christina Bockelmann Birgit Sieg	Are species-rich ecosystems healthier? Interactions between grassland species richness and the feeding ecology of horses.
			Leonid Rasran (2006) Kati Vogt (2006)	Diversity of plant propagules deposited in drift lines at the Voss River (W Norway).
			Franz Schuhwerk	The species of the <i>Hieracium bifidum</i> group in Bavaria and adjacent areas.
NATURE CONSERVATION			Michael Succow Lebrecht Jeschke	Nature conservation – claim and reality: challenges at the beginning of the 21 st century.
			Michael Trepel (1999)	Magic word participation: A chance for nature conservation?
			Otto Fränze	Alexander von Humboldt's holistic world view and its reflection in American landscape painting, literature and nature conservation.
			Peter Jacobsen	Perception and conservation of nature: The Duckburg approach.
			Felix Müller Benjamin Burkhard Wilhelm Windhorst Franziska Kroll	The ecosystem approach of the CBD: case studies for sustainable environmental management.
			Joachim Schrautzer (1987) Kai Jensen (1999) Leonid Rasran (2006) Aiko Huckauf	Population dynamics of <i>Dactylorhiza incarnata</i> (L.) Soó at Lake Barsbek.
			Fred J.A. Daniels Richard Pott	Physicochemical analyses of precipitation and leakage water in dry sand grasslands in the central part of the Veluwe, The Netherlands.
			Martin Lindner	Impact of different management practices on heathland communities in the nature reserve 'Lütjenholmer Heidedünen' (Nordfriesland, Schleswig-Holstein).
			Werner Härdtle (1990) Goddert von Oheimb Silke Fottner Marion Niemeyer Thomas Niemeyer	Can management measures cause an imbalance of nutrient budgets in heathland ecosystems?

The presentation is bilingual, with 21 of the papers written in German and eight in English. In each case the title, abstract and captions of Figures and Tables are given in both languages, which makes everything accessible to those who read either, especially with some working knowledge of the other. Although we may question the terminology “native speaker” as applied to some of the five editors of English text, the English is consistently clear. The ‘economy’ pale green soft binding disguises somewhat the quality of the contents, which include a number of excellent colour illustrations; and the lack of a pocket to contain the three loose folded A3 supplement sheets means that these are at risk of loss or damage, apart from being a bit of a nuisance (I have now added my own pocket). The compensation is, however, the

potentially very reasonable price which means that most if not all of us can own a copy. Information on the cover offers previous volumes in the series at € 2.25–17.00 - although Volume 65 has more pages than any of those listed - and indicates that different prices apply for geobotanists, students and bookshops. Further information is available from the AG Geobotanik website at <http://www.ag-geobotanik.de>, by e-mail to info@ag-geobotanik.de or from the publisher’s address, which is:

AG Geobotanik e. V, Ökologie-Zentrum,
Olshausenstraße 75, D-24098 Kiel, Germany.

*Olivia Bragg
June 2008*