apparently representing timberline specialists. Dirk Kunz (Frankfurt) introduced the Senckenberg's *SeSam* database and his databasing project; part of the wider GBIF (Global Biodiversity Information Facility) initiative. The Senckenberg museum has altogether in the arachnid and myriapod collections *c.*74,000 lots including 12,000 type series. These types are largely databased, non-types will follow eventually, and these exportable data can be accessed via <http://sesam.senckenberg.de>. Theo Blick (Hummeltal) briefed the meeting on the previous day's discussion of the endangered 'red list' spiders in Germany. Using Aloys Staudt's distribution maps for German spiders <www.spiderling.de/arages> to assess the current rarity of species, their long- and short-term prognosis, as well as human and/or biological risk factors, were used to calculate the level of endangerment. Of the 1008 recorded German species, thirty seem to be extinct, ten face extinction and sixty are highly restricted in their distribution.

Following a last look at the various posters and some society business, Ambros Hänggi (Basel) led the final session in a discussion of what prices should experts charge for identifying spiders? Should these reflect the expertise of the identifier, the handling time of sorted or unsorted material and whether all the species or just most of the species (i.e. excluding very hard ones) need to be identified? Under ideal conditions a work-rate of 1000 spiders a day *could* be possible and the question is whether one should charge by the animal, or by the hour. Afterwards, another fine evening was had in a local restaurant, and while I had to head home on Sunday morning, around thirty people enjoyed the beautiful sunshine of an Indian summer on an excursion organised by Andreas Maltan to the 'Oberes Mittelrheintal' – a UNESCO world heritage site.

A German translation of this review will appear in the Arachnologische Mitteilungen.

Museum für Naturkunde der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Invalidenstr. 43, D-10015 BERLIN, Germany; e-mail: jason.dunlop@museum.hu-berlin.de

Caucasian Spiders – A Faunistic Database on the Spiders of the Caucasus: http://caucasus-spiders.info

Information on the spider fauna of the biogeographically species-rich landscapes between the Black and Caspian Seas exist, distributed across *c.*140 scientific articles (mostly published in Russian). So far no serious attempt has been made to review this material and distil these data into country check-lists or species distribution maps.

In order to fill this gap we set up a database dealing with these data and made it publicly available via a web-based application in March 2006. After six months of continuous data-input and the publication of version 1.3, the database now includes the records of 64 articles (45% of all 142). Already these data amount to 9429 single records, 3045 of which are based on actual collections. The Caucasus-Checklist therefore includes 1002 species – a figure comparable to Germany's spider-richness. Most

Logo

species are recorded from Azerbaijan (691 species), followed by Georgia (501), the North-Caucasian Russian provinces (301) and (poorly studied) Armenia (151).

In the application's checklists it is possible to view all the records for a chosen species by clicking on its name. Next to the record list an interactive distribution map is displayed which includes bibliographic data. Please note that the record lists are currently 'work in progress', given that about 80 articles still need to be included. However, the checklists should represent the current state of knowledge on Caucasian spiders because most of the more recent/larger studies have already been incorporated. A download area provides publicly available full-text articles and abstracts. A links section and the bibliography accompany this portal.

Although the web-based database front-end is a bit rough at this present time, the application seems to be very useful for browsing and investigating. In the near future, we plan to extend this application to an agile, wiki-like knowledge management tool based on the current web technologies Semantic Web and Web 2.0. Towards this end, we describe the domain of spiders and faunistics in terms of a web ontology and setup a social collaboration tool as a dynamic front-end (Auer *et. al.* 2006) as well as service interfaces on top of this semantic database. As a long-term goal, we wish to establish a network of open faunistic databases which share a common terminology not just for spiders in the Caucasus region.

Stefan Otto & Sebastian Dietzold

References

Auer, S., Dietzold, S. & Riechert, T. (2006) OntoWiki - A Tool for Social, Semantic Collaboration; In: The Semantic Web - ISWC 2006: 5th International Semantic Web Conference, Athens, USA, November 5-9, 2006, Proceedings.

Otto, S. & Dietzold, S. (2006) *Caucasian Spiders*. A faunistic database on the spiders of the Caucasus. Version 1.3. - Internet: http://caucasus-spiders.info