



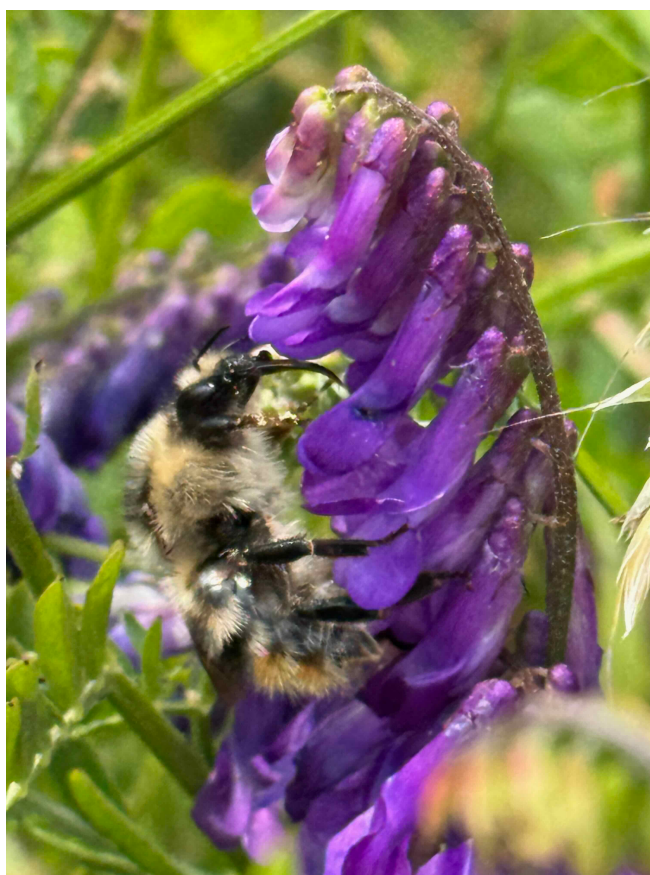
International Union for the Study of Social Insects

Mark Brown, Secretary-General
Department of Biological Sciences
School for Life Sciences and the Environment
Royal Holloway University of London, Egham, TW20 0EX, UK

I hope this newsletter finds you all well, and that your work with social insects, be that research, teaching, and/or public outreach, is changing the world for the better!

After a very long, dry period in the UK, which led to both honey bees and wasps raiding our experimental bumblebee colonies (the perils of fieldwork!), refreshing rain has descended. With climate change increasingly disrupting normal weather patterns, we hope that our social insects are able to adapt and thrive. Similarly, in a world of increasing challenges, we are here to support our IUSSI colleagues in adapting and thriving.

In this newsletter, I bring you news of our new website, the upcoming (2026) International Congress, the processes to nominate your favourite social insect researchers for the Hamilton and West-Eberhard prizes, and much more. Read on!



A Bombus sylvarum queen on fodder vetch in Essex – one of England's rarest bumblebees

IUSSI 20th International Congress 2026

Judith Korb, President

Abstract submission for the IUSSI in Freiburg will open in August, so please stay tuned and have a look at the webpage: <https://iussi2026.org/> With best wishes, Judith Korb, President of the IUSSI

News from *Insectes Sociaux*

Madeleine Beekman, Editor-in-Chief

I am pleased to tell you that *Insectes Sociaux*'s 2024 impact factor is 1.5, which is a 7.1% increase compared with 2023. That is, of course, still a very modest impact factor, but the journal ranks pretty high under the Entomology category (49 out of 109 journals). I think we are allowed to be proud of our journal.

We also published our [first Special Issue](#). *Sociable arthropods: Broadening conceptions about social insects* which was guest edited by Joël Meunier, José Javier G. Quezada-Euán and Miriam Richards. Our second Special Issue *The overlooked biodiversity of ant associates*, guest edited by Jean-Paul Lachaud, Bálint Markó, and Gabriela Pérez-Lachaud, will be published in September.

Two new Special Issues are now open for submissions: [Foraging behaviours of ants](#), and [A glimpse into a little-known world: Organisms associated with social arthropods](#). Please check these out and contact the guest editors if you'd like to know more, or to submit manuscripts for consideration for these Special Issues

I have to say that I was rather reluctant to agree with Springer's new demand for Special Issues as I felt that getting them together would be akin to pulling teeth. How wrong was I! I think the ease with which people have put together ideas for Special Issues is evidence of our social insect community's engagement with the journal. I thank everyone for their hard work. Do email me if you have an idea for a Special Issue.

To finish off this *Insectes Sociaux* news, I have decided to step down as Editor-in-Chief at the IUSSI conference in Freiburg next year. I feel that after having served the IUSSI eight years as Secretary General, and four years as Editor-in-Chief, it is time to move on and start a new chapter in my life. At some stage Mark will initiate the official search for a new Editor-in-Chief, but in the meantime feel free to get in touch if you like the idea of becoming the next EiC or simply would like to know more.

With best regards, Madeleine
Madeleine.beekman@sydney.edu.au

New Editor-in-Chief for *Insectes Sociaux*

Mark Brown, Secretary General

I would like to start by giving my heartfelt thanks, and that of the IUSSI, to Madeleine Beekman for all her service to the society, not least her recent role as Editor-in-Chief of our journal. *Insectes Sociaux* is where we present our science, as well as the source of our society's funds, so it is hugely important to the health of the IUSSI as a vibrant scientific society.

As noted above, Madeleine will be stepping down as Editor-in-Chief at our International Congress next year. If you are interested in standing for this important role, please contact Madeleine (Madeleine.beekman@sydney.edu.au) to find out more about what this job entails. After that, please contact me to apply – your application should include a 2-page CV and a nomination letter, detailing why you believe you are the person for the job, and describing your vision and action plan for *Insectes Sociaux*. The deadline for applications is 1 July 2026 (but please don't leave it until then if you're interested!).

All applicants will be presented and voted on at the International Committee Meeting of the IUSSI at our International Congress in August 2026.

New IUSSI Website

(on behalf of) Patrick Kennedy, Webmaster

I am delighted to announce the launch of our new IUSSI website. Patrick Kennedy, our new webmaster, has been hard at work on this, and after great feedback from Section Presidents we are ready to go live.

You can find the new website at: <https://www.socialinsects.org/> Please bookmark this, or maybe even make it your home page!, and then have a good browse – you'll find lots of great content and information. In addition, we hope to use the website as a central source of opportunities and information – do check out all the pages and send Patrick any information you would like him to upload. In particular, the new map page <https://www.socialinsects.org/map> is an opportunity to, literally, put your research group on the map and make it easy for other social insect researchers to find you. So please send your lab details to Patrick to help him populate this – we hope it will serve as a vehicle to enhance national and international collaborations amongst our members.

Patrick would particularly like to thank Purbayan Ghosh for their introduction to ants: <https://www.socialinsects.org/discover-ants>, Femi Benny and Laura Miller for their introduction to wasps: <https://www.socialinsects.org/discover-wasps>, and Alice Bridges and Nouredine Adjlane for their introduction to bees: <https://www.socialinsects.org/discover-bees>

International Union for the Study of Social Insects: www.iussii.org

While our old website still exists, David Nash (ex-Webmaster and current Assistant Archivist) will be putting a re-direct from it to the new website, and as the host server allows, closing it down and potentially transferring the web domain.

Nominations for the Hamilton Award 2026

Mark Brown, Secretary General

Every four years, at our International Congress, the IUSI awards the Hamilton Award to honour a senior scientist for their lifetime contribution and achievements to the biology of social insects. In addition to their profound contributions to the scientific field, awardees are also acknowledged for the influence they have had on colleagues and students. The Hamilton Award is the highest honour we bestow, and carries with it a plaque and €1000 honorarium.

The Hamilton Award was established in 2006 in memory of William D. Hamilton (1936-2000). Recipients of the Award have been Ross Crozier (2006), Charles Michener (2010), Mary Jane West-Eberhard (2014), Jacobus (Koos) Boomsma (2018), and Berthold (Bert) K Hölldobler (2022).

The IUSI hereby calls for nominations **from Sections** for the Hamilton Award. Nominations will be accepted only from Sections in good standing, and sections are free to nominate anyone, including members from other sections. Each Section can only nominate one candidate for the Hamilton Award.

Nomination materials must include the following:

- Letter of Nomination from the Section President (2 pages maximum)
- One of the following
 - Current curriculum vitae for the nominee OR
 - 2-page outline of nominee's principal contributions to the field of social insect biology, with up to 10 citations of significant publications.
- Three (3) supporting letters from members of the IUSI (not restricted to the Section nominating the person).

All material must be received by e-mail sent to mark.brown@rhul.ac.uk, by October 31, 2025.

The Secretary-General will convene a committee of Section Presidents in November 2025, and the committee will review all valid nominations to identify the 2026 winner of the Hamilton Award. The recipient will be honoured at the Congress in Freiburg, Germany.

Nominations for the West-Eberhard Award for a Junior Scientist 2026

Mark Brown, Secretary General

The West-Eberhard Award for a Junior Scientist was established by the IUSSI in 2018, named after Mary Jane West-Eberhard, and was awarded for the first time in 2022 to Patrick Kennedy. In contrast to the Hamilton Award (see above), the West-Eberhard Award recognises the contributions of a **junior scientist** to our understanding of social insects, to the scientific community as a whole (including the IUSSI), and to broader public understanding of social insect science.

Eligibility: maximum of 5 years full-time equivalent post PhD defence.

Monetary value: US\$750

Plenary lecture: the prize winner will be given a plenary slot at the XXth International Congress of the IUSSI in Freiburg, 2026

The IUSSI hereby calls for nominations **from Sections** for the West-Eberhard Award. Nominations will be accepted only from Sections in good standing, and sections are free to nominate anyone, including members from other sections. Each Section can only nominate one candidate for the West-Eberhard Award. While each Section should run its own internal nomination process, this must allow for self-nomination by junior scientists as defined by the eligibility rules above.

In line with our Society's commitment to EDI principles, nominations and self-nominations should explicitly consider any significant challenges or disparities that nominees might have faced and overcome.

Nomination materials must include the following:

- Letter of Nomination from the Section President (2 pages maximum)
- Statement of eligibility (giving PhD defence date and, if relevant, reasons for being >5 years post this)
- Current curriculum vitae for the nominee
- Brief research description (100 words)
- Major research contributions (100 words)
- Major service contributions (100 words)
- Major contribution to public understanding of social insect science (100 words)
- EDI statement, detailing any challenges or disparities the nominee has had to overcome (100 words)
- One (1) supporting letter from members of the IUSSI (not restricted to the Section nominating the person).

All material must be received by e-mail sent to mark.brown@rhul.ac.uk, by October 31, 2025.

International Union for the Study of Social Insects: www.iuss.org

The Secretary-General will convene a committee of Section Presidents in November 2025, and the committee will review all valid nominations to identify the 2026 winner of the West-Eberhard Award. The recipient will be honoured at the Congress in Freiburg, Germany.

Supporting Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Mark Brown, Secretary General

I was delighted to hear from their Section President that the Central European Section is donating €2000 to support travel grants for social insect researchers from less financially able Eastern European countries to attend the International Congress. Thank you!

I look forward to hearing from other Sections about their efforts and commitments, so that we can support our members from all over the world to attend the 2026 Congress in Germany.

If you want to contribute as an individual to our fund-raising efforts, please use the NAS-IUSSI fundraising [link](#).