Preface

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This volume contains the descriptions of arthropods and plants from the Cretaceous Taimyr, Late Eocene Baltic, Rovno, and Bitterfeld, Middle Miocene Dominican, and Mexican ambers.

Whereas the number of animal species described from the Cenomanian Burmese amber has increased exponentially in the last three years, as stated in the review by Andrew Ross (February, 2019), and has now reached more than 300 descriptions per year, other amber faunas, except for the Baltic and Dominican, have not been objects of such intense study either in the last three years, or before. A good example is the amber of Agdzhakend (Azerbaijan), close in age to Burmese amber, from which in February 2019, only the second ever arthropod (a new genus and species of cantharid beetle) was described. The first Agdzhakend species (Hymenoptera: Megalynidae) was described much earlier by A.P. Rasnitsyn, back in 1974. Also, although the study of Taimyr ambers has acquired new energy following the expedition of the Paleontological Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences in 2012, altogether only 50 species have been described in slightly more than a dozen papers in 15 years (a brief review of some new findings is discussed in this volume). A new genus and species of Cecidomyiidae are described in this volume from Ugolyak.

The number of works on Eocene amber beetles has increased noticeably in recent years. In this volume they are presented in two articles, one on Baltic and one on Rovno Curculionoidea, with the descriptions of a new genus and two species from Baltic amber, a new genus and five new species from Rovno amber,

and a new genus and species of Phalacridae from Bitterfeld amber. The volume of works on the comparison of Late Eocene amber faunas has been supplemented in this volume by comparing the Baltic and Rovno mosses and the Baltic, Rovno and Bitterfeld Chelicerata. One of the most intensely and fruitfully studied groups of amber insects of the former Soviet Union (thanks to the efforts of G.M. Dlussky) are ants: this volume includes the descriptions of a new Baltic Myrmecinae, and new Bitterfeld Aneuretinae and Dolichoderinae.

A leaf with epiphytic fungus is described for the first time from Rovno amber, and two more species are added to the seven previously described species of Rovno liverworts, unknown from other ambers. Finally, two genera and species of higher Cecidomyiidae are described from Miocene ambers (Dominican and Mexican). It should be noted that the Mexican gall midge was chosen as a symbol of the 7th International Conference on Fossil Insects of the Palaeontological Society, after which the genus was named.

Every amber fauna is, if not a new world, then at least a new country. The discovery of new worlds is naturally associated with researchers with a taste for novelty, adventure and risk. Unfortunately, the most active and promising of such explorers often leave us too early, as did Ekaterina (Katya) Sidorchuk, to whose memory this volume is dedicated.

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