

BRYOLOGICAL MEMORIES ON MARIAN KUC

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In 2000 I came to know Marian Kuc from a letter I received. In the following years there was regular correspondence between us by ordinary mail and later also by email. For this article I read and read again my file of letters from him. I never met Marian Kuc.

Over the last few years there were often complaints in his letters about his health. There were also problems with ischias. He had to endure an operation. Later he wrote me that he must use a wheel car. He could no longer work as much as he wished.

Marian Kuc has collected in several South American countries. To my surprise, I obtained over the years two gift collections from him, mainly Pottiales. This was all unidentified material. I have now named collections from: Venezuela (1980), Peru (1981), Bolivia (1984), Colombia and Ecuador (1988). Furthermore he visited Argentina, Brazil and Chile. Until now, I have not seen any material from the last three countries. Most of the collections I identified were from higher altitudes in the Andes. In total, Marian Kuc sent me about 220 numbers.

The two gift collections he mailed were first worked up here at home. That is to say, all the material was studied with a hand lens in a very wet condition, number by number, and interesting looking mixtures were separated, especially if they were large enough. The amount of material then doubled to about 450 collections.

Sometimes the information on the herbarium labels needed to be made more complete. This work always received good cooperation from Marian Kuc. At this point I only made pre-identifi-

cations, mostly to genus. After drying, the material was finally placed into workable groups.

He leaves behind a rather large herbarium. From the tropical areas many material is still unnamed. According to his letters he collected in the South American countries about 6000 numbers.

Parts of the pottiaceous mosses have been fully named over the years. From the genus *Didymodon* I counted about 140 numbers, and for the genera *Hennediella*, *Syntrichia* and *Tortula*, I counted about 90 numbers from his herbarium.

The *Didymodon* collections were mostly fully identified in Murcia, Spain by several bryologists, including Juan A. Jiménez, whose work is focused especially on South American material of this genus, M. Teresa Gallego who named the *Hennediella*, *Syntrichia* and *Tortula* material (she works in particular on the genus *Syntrichia* in South America) and María J. Cano who studied mainly the *Hennediella* collections for her revision of the genus.

At present, I have identified all the material from the genera *Anoetangium*, *Barbula* (p.p.), *Bryoerythrophyllum*, *Hymenostylium*, *Hyophila*, *Pseudosymblypharis*, *Scopelophila* and *Trichostomum* (p.p.). The fully named material is now housed in herbarium Leiden (L), the Netherlands.

Within the genus *Didymodon* for instance, the following identifications were made: *Didymodon australasiae* (Hook. & Grev.) R. H. Zander (26×) – a widespread species, mainly present in (sub)tropical areas; *D. laevigatus* (Mitt.) R. H. Zander (20×) – a beautiful, reddish-brown, mostly rather large species, regularly collected in South and Central America; *D. pruinusosus* (Mitt.) R. H.

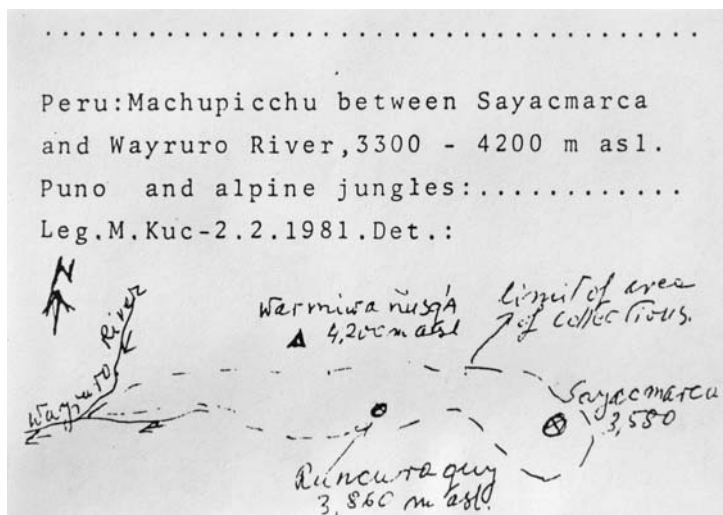


Fig. 1. Example of original Dr. Marian Kuc's herbarium label.

Zander (8×) – a rather rare species from South America, which is easily overlooked; *D. minusculus* (R. S. Williams) R. H. Zander (5×) – another tiny species and also easily missed; *D. patagonicus* (Mitt.) Broth. (4×), *D. humboldtii* (Herzog) E. H. Hegew. & P. D. Hegew. (1×) and *Didymodon* sp. (5×).

Marian was often very keen, in his letters, to know, if there were 'new species for science' present among his collections. The *Didymodon* sp. material mentioned above could be a candidate for

this. This material is still not fully named. They are also present in herbarium Leiden (L).

His herbarium has been evaluated by several people to be valuable, especially the (tiny) *Didymodon* material. The majority of his herbarium will be housed in Kraków (Poland), herbarium KRAM.

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