Correspondence

Honoured by taxon name—Robin John Tillyard

The New Zealand bee fly genus *Tillyardomyia* Tonnoir, 1927 (Diptera: Bombyliidae) is one of 12 currently recognised valid generic names honouring Dr Robin John Tillyard F.R.S. (1881–1937) for his research on living and fossil insects. According to Tonnoir (1927) Tillyard was the discoverer of the family Bombyliidae in New Zealand and so *Tillyardomyia* was named after him even though he did not contribute any specimens of the type series for the single uncommon species of this genus, *T. gracilis* Tonnoir, 1927. In addition to this and the other 11 patronymic generic names, there are numerous specific names honouring him for his research.

Tillyard was a Foundation Scholar at Queen's College, Cambridge University, taking a B.A. degree in mathematics. After reading theology for a year and realising that the church was not his vocation, he secured a teaching appointment in Australia as mathematics and science teacher at Sydney Grammar School, where his interest in dragonflies developed. He left teaching in 1913 to become a research student at Sydney University, gaining a B.Sc. by research on dragonflies. This was followed in 1917 by a D.Sc. and publication of his book "The Biology of Dragonflies". At the end of 1920 he was appointed the first head of the Biological Section of the newly formed Cawthron Institute, Nelson, where he remained until 1928 (Crosby 1977). He was able to employ a small team of entomologists to research a wide variety of entomological problems. New species were also described, and these primary types formed the nucleus of the present-day New Zealand Arthropod Collection (NZAC) now located in Auckland under the stewardship of the crown research institute Landcare Research. In 1928 Tillyard went to Australia, after an initial invitation from the Australian Prime Minister, to set up the Division of Economic Entomology, CSIRO in Canberra and its associated insect collection which is now the Australian National Insect Collection (ANIC).