

Obituary: John Munne Moreland (1921–2012)

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John (Jock) Moreland was born in Wanganui in 1921, where he grew up and attended school. In 1950, after serving with the 3rd New Zealand Division in the Pacific and the 2nd Division in Italy during the Second World War, Jock joined the staff of the Dominion Museum (now the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa). While in Egypt on R & R in 1945, Jock developed an interest in Egyptology during a visit to the tomb of Tutankhamun, and his family suggests this may have been the spark that lit his later museum career. He completed a Bachelor's degree in zoology in 1958 at Victoria University of Wellington. The Dominion Museum was, at the time, rebuilding its staff and displays, following its closure during and immediately after the war, when it was occupied by Allied forces. Its director at the time, Dr (later Sir) Robert Falla, was a household name as a result of his weekly radio broadcasts on natural history. Many queries poured into the museum, and Falla rightly decided that specialised staff were needed to deal with the increasing public interest in natural history, to undertake research into New Zealand's biota, and to build a national reference collection of animals and plants.

Jock was therefore appointed as Assistant Zoologist working under Charles McCann, the museum's only Vertebrate Zoologist. McCann, who was most interested in marine mammals, gave Jock the task of looking after and developing the museum's seabird collection. This resulted in his taking over the New Zealand Bird Banding Scheme, which was a part of the museum's brief at that time. In 1957, Jock published 'A guide to the larger oceanic birds (albatrosses and giant petrel) of New Zealand waters'. During that decade, he also began his fish studies.

Jock eventually became the first true Curator of Fishes for the museum. As such, he was given the task of building up the national collections and answering the many enquiries from the public about fishes and their habits. He became



Fig. 1 Jock Moreland in his office at the Dominion Museum, early 1960s.

very well known throughout New Zealand as an authority on fishes, and during his career published a number of research papers and several books (see Appendix 1), including the iconic *New Zealand sea anglers' guide* with co-author Ray Doogue and artist Eric Heath, which went to nine editions. He described new genera and species of fish from New Zealand, including the alert pigfish, *Alertichthys blacki*, named after Captain Alex Black and his ship the MV *Alert*, an ex-Navy Harbour Defence Motor Launch. Jock was also a keen field worker and went on a number of expeditions to further the museum's collections. He was on the Chatham Islands Expedition in 1954 onboard the *Alert* and also made trips on the *Admiral* and *Tirohia* with Victoria University staff members Jack Garrick and Peter Castle to sample the deep waters of Cook Strait. In the 1970s, Jock made a number of collecting trips, including to the Subantarctic Islands, on Alex Black's new research vessel, *Acheron*. In the mid- to late 1970s, Jock and staff colleague Alan Baker (later Director of the National Museum) made a series of visits to Northland at the invitation of Museum Associate

Bill Higgins, who made available a launch for the two museum researchers to sample the northeastern coast. Many beam-trawl and dredge samples were obtained from the previously understudied Bay of Islands.

Jock had a great sense of humour, as evidenced by the following anecdote provided by Elliot Dawson, formerly of the New Zealand Oceanographic Institute:

I recall sending him some regurgitated fish samples from black-billed gulls, asking him what sort of fish they were. I also sent samples of earthworms to Ken Lee at the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research asking him, of course, what kind of worms they were, only I sent the wrong specimens to each person! Eventually I got a reply back from Jock saying the worms were a new species of fish which he had pleasure in naming after me as *Clotus imbicilicus*!

As Jock was a keen fisherman, being a marine biologist had its advantages – he was able to catch fish on rod and line in a number of exotic locations around New Zealand, and his summer research trips to the Bay of Islands often resulted in smoked marlin and kingfish being returned to Wellington. On one occasion, while fishing with Alan Baker on his launch *Petrel* in Cook Strait, a sperm whale breached very close to the boat and sent a huge wave towards the fishermen. Jock turned to a wide-eyed Alan, who was desperately trying to turn the vessel bow-on to the on-coming wave, and said, ‘Quick, where’s your surfboard?!’ He had a taste for muttonbirds, and in the season would arrange for large tins (the old kerosene type) of smoked and salted birds to be sent up from Stewart Island/Rakiura, and would then distribute some to keen museum staff. Jock also enjoyed hunting trips with the Garrick family – initially deer hunting in Hawke’s Bay, followed by duck hunting in other North Island locations.

As the Dominion and, later, National Museum staff grew during the 1960s and 1970s under Director Richard Dell’s management, Jock became the staff’s ‘elder statesman’; he was very supportive of new appointees and was always available for advice or assistance. He had an observant eye and wide interest in New Zealand’s flora and fauna, and he was keen on popularising science and passing his knowledge on to young naturalists. He was also a foundation member of the Wellington branch of the New Zealand Weights and Measures Club, which met every Friday night at a well-known city hotel. Other members were from the Wildlife Service and Victoria University zoology, geography and economics departments, and there were occasional visiting

scientists from out of town or overseas (e.g. the Smithsonian Institution). Many good plans for research projects and exotic field excursions were developed at such gatherings!

Jock retired in 1981 and lived with his wife Mary – a former much-loved National Museum education officer – in Hataitai, Wellington. He developed a very productive vegetable garden and continued to enjoy hunting and fishing with his old friends and colleagues to a ripe old age. He died in June 2012.

Acknowledgements

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Appendix 1: List of publications

Research papers

- Moreland, J.M.** and Dell, R.K. (1950). Preliminary report on ovoviparity in a New Zealand blennioid fish – *Ericentrus rubrus* (Hutton). *New Zealand Science Review* 8: 39–40.
- Moreland, J.M.** (1956). Notes on four fishes new to the New Zealand fauna. *Records of the Dominion Museum* 3(1): 9–11.
- Garrick, J.A.F. and **Moreland, J.M.** (1956). The cyclostomes and fishes of the Ross Sea. *Royal Society of New Zealand, Antarctic Research Committee. Special Report* 1. 3 pp.
- Moreland, J.M.** (1957). A guide to the larger oceanic birds (albatrosses and giant petrel) of New Zealand waters. *Tuatara* 6(3): 99–107.
- Moreland, J.M.** (1957). Report on the fishes. P. 34. Appendix 6. In: Knox, G.A. (ed.). General account of the Chatham Islands 1954 Expedition. *Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR) Bulletin* 122. 37 pp.
- Moreland, J.M.** (1959). The composition, distribution and origins of the New Zealand fish fauna. *Proceedings of the New Zealand Ecological Society* 6: 28–30.
- Moreland, J.M.** (1960). A new genus and species of congipodid fish from southern New Zealand. *Records of the Dominion Museum* 3(3): 241–246.

- Moreland, J.M.** (1960). The occurrence of the Pacific blue marlin (*Makaira ampla mazana*) in New Zealand waters. *Records of the Dominion Museum* 3(3): 247–250.
- Garrick, J.A.F. and **Moreland, J.M.** (1968). Notes on a bramble shark, *Echinorhinus cookei*, from Cook Strait, New Zealand. *Records of the Dominion Museum* 6(10): 133–139.
- Moreland, J.M.** (1975). New records of fish from northern New Zealand waters. *Records of the Dominion Museum* 8(17): 277–294.
- Moreland, J.M.** (1975). Fishes of rock pools. *New Zealand's Nature Heritage* 55: 1533–1541.
- Paulin, C.D. and **Moreland, J.M.** (1979). Halosauridae of the south-west Pacific (Pisces: Teleostei: Notacanthiformes). *New Zealand Journal of Zoology* 6: 267–271.
- Paulin, C.D. and **Moreland, J.M.** (1979). *Congiopodus coriaceus*, a new species of pigfish, and a redescription of *C. leucopaecilus* (Richardson), from New Zealand (Pisces: Congiopodidae). *New Zealand Journal of Zoology* 6: 601–608.

Books and book chapters

- Doogue, R.B., **Moreland, J.M.** and Heath, E. (1960). *New Zealand sea anglers' guide*. Wellington: A.H. & A.W. Reed. 288 pp.
- Doogue, R.B., **Moreland, J.M.** and Heath, E. (1961). *New Zealand sea anglers' guide*. 2nd edn. Wellington: A.H. & A.W. Reed. 318 pp.
- Moreland, J.M.** (1961). Game fishes of New Zealand. Pp. 59–90. In: Illingworth, N. (ed.). *Fighting fins: big game fishing in New Zealand waters*. Wellington: A.H. & A.W. Reed. 256 pp.
- Moreland, J.M.** (1963). *Native sea fishes*. Nature in New Zealand Series. Wellington: A.H. & A.W. Reed. 64 pp.
- Doogue, R.B., **Moreland, J.M.** and Heath, E. (1964). *New Zealand sea anglers' guide*. 3rd edn. Wellington: A.H. & A.W. Reed. 317 pp.
- Moreland, J.M.** (1965). Marine fishes. Pp. 124–127. In: Salt, L.E. and Pascoe, J.D. (eds). *Oxford New Zealand Encyclopedia*. London: Oxford University Press. 376 pp.
- Moreland, J.M.** (1966). Southern kingfish or hake. P.2. In: McLintock, A.H. (ed.). *An encyclopaedia of New Zealand*. Wellington: Government Printer. 229 pp.
- Doogue, R.B., **Moreland, J.M.** and Heath, E. (1966). *New Zealand sea anglers' guide*. 4th edn. Wellington: A.H. & A.W. Reed. 317 pp.

- Heath, E. and **Moreland, J.M.** (1967). *Marine fishes of New Zealand*. Wellington, Auckland, Sydney: A.H. & A.W. Reed. 56 pp.
- Doogue, R.B., **Moreland, J.M.** and Heath, E. (1969). *New Zealand sea anglers' guide*. 5th edn. Wellington: A.H. & A.W. Reed. 313 pp.
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- Doogue, R.B., **Moreland, J.M.** and Heath, E. (1973). *New Zealand sea anglers' guide*. 7th edn. Wellington: A.H. & A.W. Reed. 313 pp.
- Doogue, R.B. and **Moreland, J.M.** (1978). *New Zealand sea anglers' guide*. 8th edn. Wellington: A.H. & A.W. Reed. 313 pp.
- Doogue, R.B., **Moreland, J.M.** and Heath, E. (1982). *New Zealand sea anglers' guide*. 9th edn. Wellington: A.H. & A.W. Reed. 320 pp.
- Moreland, J.M.** and Heath, E. (1983). *Marine fishes. 1*. Mobile New Zealand Nature Series. Wellington: Reed. 79 pp.
- Paul, L.J. and **Moreland, J.M.** (1993). *Handbook of New Zealand marine fishes*. Wellington: Reed Publishing Limited. 150 pp.

Appendix 2: New fish taxa described by Jock Moreland

- Family Congiopodidae
Alertichthys Moreland, 1960
Alertichthys blacki Moreland, 1960
Congiopodus coriaceus Paulin & Moreland, 1979

Appendix 3: Animal taxa named after Jock Moreland

- Fishes
 Family Gobiesocidae
Dellichthys morelandi Briggs, 1955
 Family Percophidae
Bembrops morelandi Nelson, 1978
Hemerocoetes morelandi Nelson, 1979

Crustaceans

Family Lernanthropidae

Aethon morelandi Hewitt, 1968

Family Hippolytidae

Lysmata morelandi (Yaldwyn, 1971)

(described as *Hippolysmata* (*Hippolysmata*) *morelandi*
Yaldwyn, 1971)

Mollusc

Family Cuspidariidae

Cuspidaria morelandi Dell, 1956

References

- Briggs, J.C. (1955). A monograph of the clingfishes (Order Xenopterygii). *Stanford Ichthyological Bulletin* 6. 244 pp.
- Dell, R.K. (1956). The archibenthal Mollusca of New Zealand. *Dominion Museum Bulletin* 18. 235 pp.
- Hewitt, G. (1968). Some New Zealand parasitic Copepoda of the family Anthosomidae. *Zoological Publications from Victoria University* 47. 31 pp.
- Nelson, J.S. (1978). *Bembrops morelandi*, a new percophid fish from New Zealand, with notes on other members of the genus. *National Museum of New Zealand Records* 1(14): 237–241.
- Nelson, J.S. (1979). Revision of the fishes of the New Zealand genus *Hemerocoetes* (Perciformes: Percophidae), with descriptions of two new species. *New Zealand Journal of Zoology* 6: 587–599.
- Yaldwyn, J.C. (1971). Preliminary descriptions of a new genus and twelve new species of natant decapod Crustacea from New Zealand. *Records of the Dominion Museum* 7(10): 85–94.