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To the Executive Committee of the New Zealand Entomological Society,

We would like to nominate Ricardo Palma of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa as a fellow of the New Zealand Entomological Society.

Ricardo was awarded a Masters' degree from the University of Buenos Aires in 1971. His topic was on Argentinian bird lice and this marked the start of a career devoted to the study of this group of insects. However, Ricardo's career was temporarily halted when he was evicted from Chile as a foreign national. He arrived in New Zealand in 1974 and he worked in a Christchurch timber yard for two months before coming to the attention of Professor Bob Pilgrim of the University of Canterbury. He worked as Professor Pilgrim's research assistant for two years before accepting a position at the National Museum (now Te Papa) in Wellington in 1976 and has been employed there for 39 years.

While Ricardo has worked on several groups including flies and hydrenid beetles, the overwhelming focus of his over 130 publications is on bird lice, a field in which he is regarded as a world authority. Ricardo has undertaken several major taxonomic revisions of louse groups. He has authored or co-authored descriptions of many new species: 38 lice, four flies, five beetles, three mites and a bird. Indeed, Ricardo has the rather unusual claim to fame of being involved in the description of both a new species of bird (the Okarito brown kiwi) and its lice. Ricardo has 11 species and one genus named after him, and some seem particularly apt. The genus *Palmellus* Valim & Weckstein, 2012 is noted for its small body size, while *Rallicola palmai* Price & Clayton, 1993 is described as having unusual genitalia!

Other noteworthy achievements include his co-authorships of a world checklist of chewing lice and the catalogues of ectoparasites of Australian, New Zealand and Antarctic birds included as appendices in the monumental seven volume *Handbook of Australian, New Zealand and Antarctic Birds*. Ricardo's formidable reputation as a taxonomist saw him join the Ornithological Society's committee for the 2010 revision of the checklist of New Zealand birds.



Ricardo has also made a substantial contribution as an editor or as a member of editorial boards on publications such as *The Fauna of New Zealand* series, Te Papa's research journal *Tuhinga*, *Zootaxa*, *The New Zealand Journal of Zoology* and several overseas journals.

Ricardo's contribution to entomology is not limited to publications. In his capacity as curator of Te Papa's entomology collection he has dealt with literally thousands of enquiries from researchers and members of the public during his 39 years on the staff.

Yours faithfully,



Phil Sirvid



Mike Fitzgerald

