

Preface

This book is the result of many years of collaboration between the editors. Our collective work, inspired by many evenings of discussion and friendly, sometimes hotly debated, arguments, has caused us to wonder why so little of the vast amount of information on pests and vector-borne diseases has been put together in a series where scientists and students can find information arranged around one specific theme. Scientific output has increased dramatically in the last decade, accompanied by a rapid increase in journal publications. The internet and literature databases such as Web-of-Science, PubMed and Scopus give access to a sheer endless, and therefore insurmountable, resource of information that is still difficult to grasp for those in search of an update on a specific topic.

The current book is the first volume of a new book series titled 'Ecology and Control of Vector-borne Diseases', which we hope will become a platform for presenting rapid overviews on important topics in this field. Ecology is our focus, as the rapid changes in environment and climate are likely to affect arthropod vectors of disease in ways that were not foreseen not very long ago. The 19th Century was an age of discovery, when many vector-borne diseases were identified and a start was made with the introduction of public health. This was followed by rapid developments of effective drugs and pesticides throughout the 20th Century. It was believed that vector-borne diseases would be eradicated, or at least, become things of the past. At the start of the 21st Century the situation has changed and infectious vector-borne diseases, as well as pests, are resurging once again or advance their distribution. This necessitates re-addressing the factors that determine the force of infection and transmission in natural ecosystems, where most of these arthropods originate from.

In the coming years we intend to address a series of topics in vector ecology that are considered 'hot' and/or sufficiently important that they merit a special issue, such as the book in front of you. In order to make the book accessible to a wide readership, we have arranged, with kind agreement of the publisher, that it will appear as a free e-publication one year after publication.

In this volume we focus on emerging pests and vector-borne diseases in Europe. More than seventy scientists have contributed to this highly relevant topic, and we thank them for their contribution and having stayed within the time frame required for the production of this book. All chapters have been reviewed by independent reviewers, and the comments made have been used for improvement of the manuscripts. This anonymous reviewing work takes time, and we are very grateful to those colleagues who have accepted our request for review. We thank Mike Jacobs and Marijn van der Gaag of Wageningen Academic Publishers for having worked efficiently and in a friendly manner to make publication of this book possible. Hubert Krekels of Wageningen University and Research Centre has made arrangements for the e-publication, and we very much appreciate his assistance. We thank Margriet Huisman for secretarial support and Hans Smid for the cover design, which inspired us to start thinking of Volume 2. Special thanks to Françoise Kaminker, who has language-edited several chapters, and provided useful advice.

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